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CHAPTER I

The Pill of Murti-Bing

• 829 IT was only toward the middle of the twentieth century that the inhabitants of many European countries came, in general unpleasantly, to the realization that their fate could be influenced directly by intricate and abstruse books of philosophy. Their bread, their work, their private lives began to depend on this or that decision in disputes on principles to which, until then, they had never paid any attention. In their eyes, the philosopher had always been a sort of dreamer whose divagations had no effect on reality. The average human being, even if he had once been exposed to it, wrote philosophy off as utterly impractical and useless. Therefore the great intellectual work of the Marxists could easily pass as just one more variation on a sterile pastime. Only a few individuals understood the causes and probable consequences of this general indifference.

538 A curious book appeared in Warsaw in 1932. It was a
829 novel, in two volumes, entitled *Insatiability*. Its author was Stanislaw Ignacy Witkiewicz, a painter, writer, and philosopher, who had constructed a philosophical system akin to the monadology of Leibnitz. As in his earlier novel, *Farewell to Autumn*, his language was difficult, full of neologisms. Brutal descriptions of erotic scenes al-

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ternated with whole pages of discussions on Husserl, Carnap, and other contemporary philosophers. Besides, one could not always tell whether the author was serious or joking; and the subject matter seemed to be pure fantasy.

The action of the book took place in Europe, more precisely in Poland, at some time in the near future or even in the present, that is, in the thirties, forties, or fifties. The social group it portrayed was that of musicians, painters, philosophers, aristocrats, and higher-ranking military officers. The whole book was nothing but a study of decay: mad, dissonant music; erotic perversion; widespread use of narcotics; dispossessed thinking; false conversions to Catholicism; and complex psychopathic personalities. This decadence reigned at a time when western civilization was said to be threatened by an army from the East, a Sino-Mongolian army that dominated all the territory stretching from the Pacific to the Baltic.

Witkiewicz's heroes are unhappy in that they have no faith and no sense of meaning in their work. This atmosphere of decay and senselessness extends throughout the entire country. And at that moment, a great number of hawkers appear in the cities peddling Murti-Bing pills. Murti-Bing was a Mongolian philosopher who had succeeded in producing an organic means of transporting a "philosophy of life." This Murti-Bing "philosophy of life," which constituted the strength of the Sino-Mongolian army, was contained in pills in an extremely condensed form. A man who used these pills changed completely. He became serene and happy. The problems he had struggled with until then suddenly appeared to be superficial and unimportant. He smiled indulgently at those who continued to worry about them. Most affected were all questions pertaining to unsolvable ontological difficulties. A man who swallowed Murti-Bing pills became imper-

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vious to any metaphysical concerns. The excesses into which art falls when people vainly seek in form the wherewithal to appease their spiritual hunger were but outmoded stupidities for him. He no longer considered the approach of the Sino-Mongolian army as a tragedy for his own civilization. He lived in the midst of his compatriots like a healthy individual surrounded by madmen. More and more people took the Murti-Bing cure, and their resultant calm contrasted sharply with the nervousness of their environment.

The epilogue, in a few words: the outbreak of the war led to a meeting of the armies of the West with those of the East. In the decisive moment, just before the great battle, the leader of the Western army surrendered to the enemy; and in exchange, though with the greatest honors, he was beheaded. The Eastern army occupied the country and the new life, that of Murti-Bingism, began. The heroes of the novel, once tormented by philosophical "insatiety," now entered the service of the new society. Instead of writing the dissonant music of former days, they composed marches and odes. Instead of painting abstractions as before, they turned out socially useful pictures. But since they could not rid themselves completely of their former personalities, they became schizophrenics.

So much for the novel. Its author often expressed his belief that religion, philosophy, and art are living out their last days. Yet he found life without them worthless. On September 17, 1939, learning that the Red Army had crossed the eastern border of Poland, he committed suicide by taking veronal and cutting his wrists.

Today, Witkiewicz's vision is being fulfilled in the minutest detail throughout a large part of the European continent. Perhaps sunlight, the smell of the earth, little everyday pleasures, and the forgetfulness that work brings

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829 can ease somewhat the tensions created by this process of fulfillment. But beneath the activity and bustle of daily life is the constant awareness of an irrevocable choice to be made. One must either die (physically or spiritually), or else one must be reborn according to a prescribed method, namely, the taking of Murti-Bing pills. People in the West are often inclined to consider the lot of converted countries in terms of might and coercion. That is wrong. There is an internal longing for harmony and happiness that lies deeper than ordinary fear or the desire to escape misery or physical destruction. The fate of completely consistent, non-dialectical people like Witkiewicz is a warning for many an intellectual. All about him, in the city streets, he sees the frightening shadows of internal exiles, irreconcilable, non-participating, eroded by hatred.

829 In order to understand the situation of a writer in a
156 people's democracy, one must seek the reasons for his activity and ask how he maintains his equilibrium. Whatever one may say, the New Faith affords great possibilities for an active and positive life. And Murti-Bing is more tempting to an intellectual than to a peasant or laborer. For the intellectual, the New Faith is a candle that he circles like a moth. In the end, he throws himself into the flame for the glory of mankind. We must not treat this desire for self-immolation lightly. Blood flowed freely in Europe during the religious wars, and he who joins the New Faith today is paying off a debt to that European tradition. We are concerned here with questions more significant than mere force.

I shall try to grasp those profound human longings and to speak about them as if one really could analyze what is the warm blood and the flesh, itself, of man. If I should try to describe the reasons why a man becomes a revolu-

1/ [see category 116, p. 4 -- Analyst]

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tionary I would be neither eloquent nor restrained enough. I admit that I have too much admiration for those who fight evil, whether their choice of ends and means be right or wrong. I draw the line, however, at those intellectuals who *adapt* themselves, although the fact that they are adapted and not genuine revolutionaries in no way diminishes their newly acquired zeal and enthusiasm.

There are, I believe, a few key concepts which may lead us to understand why they accept Murti-Bing.

THE VOID

The society portrayed by Witkiewicz is distinguished by the fact that in it religion has ceased to exist as a force. And it is true that religion long ago lost its hold on men's minds not only in the people's democracies, but elsewhere as well. As long as a society's best minds were occupied by theological questions, it was possible to speak of a given religion as the way of thinking of the whole social organism. All the matters which most actively concerned the people were referred to it and discussed in its terms. But that belongs to a dying era. We have come by easy stages to a lack of a common system of thought that could unite the peasant cutting his hay, the student poring over formal logic, and the mechanic working in an automobile factory. Out of this lack arises the painful sense of detachment or abstraction that oppresses the "creators of culture." Religion has been replaced by philosophy which, however, has strayed into spheres increasingly less accessible to the layman. The discussions of Husserl by Witkiewicz's heroes can scarcely interest a reader of even better-than-average education; whereas the peasants remained bound to the Church, be it only emotionally and traditionally. Music, painting, and poetry became some-

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829 thing completely foreign to the great majority of people.
156 A theory developed that art should become a substitute for religion: "metaphysical feelings" were to be expressed in the "compression of pure form"; and so form soon came to dominate content.

To belong to the masses is the great longing of the "alienated" intellectual. It is such a powerful longing that, in trying to appease it, a great many of them who once looked to Germany or Italy for inspiration have now become converted to the New Faith. Actually, the rightist totalitarian program was exceptionally poor. The only gratification it offered came from collective *warmth:* crowds, red faces, mouths open in a shout, marches, arms brandishing sticks; but little rational satisfaction. Neither racist doctrines, nor hatred of foreigners, nor the glorification of one's own national traditions could efface the feeling that the entire program was improvised to deal with
829 problems of the moment. But Murti-Bing[1] is different. It
812 lays scientific foundations. At the same time, it scraps all
156 vestiges of the past. Post-Kantian philosophy, fallen into disrepute because of its remoteness from the life of men; art designed for those who, having no religion, dare not admit that to seek the "absolute" through a juxtaposition of colors and sounds is cowardly and inconclusive thinking; and the semi-magic, semi-religious mentality of the peasants—these are replaced by a *single* system, a single language of ideas. The truck driver and elevator operator employed by a publishing firm now read the same Marxist classics as its director or staff writers. A day laborer and a historian can reach an understanding on this basis of common reading. Obviously, the difference that may exist between them in mental level is no smaller than that which separated a theologian from a village blacksmith in the middle ages.

[1] [See category 116, p. 4 — Marxist.]

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But the fundamental principles are universal; the great spiritual schism has been obliterated. Dialectical materialism has united everyone, and philosophy (i.e., dialectics) once more determines the patterns of life. It is beginning to be regarded with a respect one reserves only for a force on which important things depend: bread and milk for one's children, one's own happiness and safety. The intellectual has once more become *useful*. He who may once have done his thinking and writing in his free moments away from a paying job in a bank or post office, has now found his rightful place on earth. He has been restored to society, whereas the businessmen, aristocrats, and tradespeople who once considered him a harmless blunderer have now been dispossessed. They are indeed delighted to find work as cloakroom attendants and to hold the coat of a former employee of whom they said, in pre-war days, "It seems he writes." We must not oversimplify, however, the gratifications of personal ambition; they are merely the outward and visible signs of social usefulness, symbols of a recognition that strengthens the intellectual's feeling of *belonging*.

THE ABSURD

Even though one seldom speaks about metaphysical motives that can lead to a complete change of people's political opinions, such motives do exist and can be observed in some of the most sensitive and intelligent men. Let us imagine a spring day in a city situated in some country similar to that described in Witkiewicz's novel. One of his heroes is taking a walk. He is tormented by what we may call the *suction* of the absurd. What is the significance of the lives of the people he passes, of the senseless bustle, the laughter, the pursuit of money, the stupid

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CHAPTER II

Looking to the West

"ARE Americans *really* stupid?" I was asked in Warsaw. In the voice of the man who posed the question, there was despair, as well as the hope that I would contradict him. This question reveals the attitude of the average person in the people's democracies toward the West: it is despair mixed with a residue of hope.

During the last few years, the West has given these people a number of reasons to despair politically. In the case of the intellectual, other, more complicated reasons come into play. Before the countries of Central and Eastern Europe entered the sphere of the Imperium, they lived through the Second World War. That war was much more devastating there than in the countries of Western Europe. It destroyed not only their economies, but also a great many values which had seemed till then unshakeable.

Man tends to regard the order he lives in as *natural*. The houses he passes on his way to work seem more like rocks rising out of the earth than like products of human hands. He considers the work he does in his office or factory as essential to the harmonious functioning of the world. The clothes he wears are exactly what they should be, and he laughs at the idea that he might equally well be wear-

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or the world of war? Both are natural, if both are within the realm of one's experience. All the concepts men live by are a product of the historic formation in which they find themselves. Fluidity and constant change are the characteristics of phenomena. And man is so plastic a being that one can even conceive of the day when a thoroughly self-respecting citizen will crawl about on all fours, sporting a tail of brightly colored feathers as a sign of conformity to the order he lives in.

The man of the East cannot take Americans seriously because they have never undergone the experiences that teach men how relative their judgments and thinking habits are. Their resultant lack of imagination is appalling. Because they were born and raised in a given social order and in a given system of values, they believe that any other order must be "unnatural," and that it cannot last because it is incompatible with human nature. But even they may one day know fire, hunger, and the sword. In all probability this is what will occur; for it is hard to believe that when one half of the world is living through terrible disasters, the other half can continue a nineteenth-century mode of life, learning about the distress of its distant fellowmen only from movies and newspapers. Recent examples teach us that this cannot be. An inhabitant of Warsaw or Budapest once looked at newsreels of bombed Spain or burning Shanghai, but in the end he learned how these and many other catastrophes appear in actuality. He read gloomy tales of the N.K.V.D., until one day he found he himself had to deal with it. *If something exists in one place, it will exist everywhere.* This is the conclusion he draws from his observations, and so he has no particular faith in the momentary prosperity of America. He suspects that the years 1933–45 in Europe pre-figure what will occur elsewhere. A hard school, where ignorance was punished

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● 829 not by bad marks but by death, has taught him to think sociologically and historically. But it has not freed him from irrational feelings. He is apt to believe in theories that foresee violent changes in the countries of the West, for he finds it unjust that they should escape the hardships he had to undergo.

The only system of thought that is accessible to him is dialectical materialism, and it attracts him because it speaks a language that is understandable in the light of his experience. The illusory "natural" order of the Western countries is doomed, according to dialectical materialism (in the Stalinist version), to crash as a result of a crisis. Wherever there is a crisis, the ruling classes take refuge in fascism as a safeguard against the revolution of the proletariat. Fascism means war, gas chambers, and crematoria. True, the crisis in America predicted for the moment of demobilization did not occur; true, England introduced social security and socialized medicine to a hitherto unknown degree; and it is true, as well, that anti-Communist hysteria in the United States, whatever else may have inspired it, was largely motivated by fear of an armed and hostile power. Still these are merely modifications of a formula that is being proved in other respects. If the world is divided between Fascism and Communism, obviously Fascism must lose since it is the last, desperate refuge of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie rules through demagoguery, which in practice means that prominent positions are filled by irresponsible people who commit follies in moments of decision. Just such follies were Hitler's ruthless policy toward the Eastern peoples, or Mussolini's involvement of Italy in the war.

A man need not be a Stalinist to reason thus. On the contrary, knowing how doubtful are any benefits from the system evolved in the Center, he would be overjoyed

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to see a gigantic meteor wipe that cause of his misery off the face of the earth. He is, however, only a man. He weighs his chances and concludes it is unwise to align himself with the side that has been damned by the Being which has taken the place of God in this century, i.e. History. The propaganda to which he is subjected tries by every means to prove that Nazism and Americanism are identical in that they are products of the same economic conditions. He believes this propaganda only slightly less than the average American believes the journalists who assure him that Hitlerism and Stalinism are one and the same.

Even if he stands on a higher rung of the hierarchy and so has access to information about the West, he is still unable to weigh the relative strength and weakness of that half of the world. The optical instrument he sees through is so constructed that it encompasses only pre-determined fields of vision. Looking through it, he beholds only what he expected to see. For example, accustomed to living in a society in which law exists exclusively as a Party tool, and in which the sole criterion of human action is its effectiveness, he finds it hard to imagine a system in which every citizen feels himself bound by the sanctions of the law. These sanctions may have been introduced in order to protect the interests of privileged groups, but they remain even after the interests change; and it is not easy to supplant old laws with new. Every citizen is entangled in a network of statutes whose origin lies in some remote past. As a result, the mechanism of collective life is so unwieldy that anyone who tries to be truly active struggles helplessly to free himself of its restrictions.

The inhabitant of Central or Eastern Europe is incapable of understanding delays, absurd decisions, political campaigns, mutual recriminations, public opinion polls,

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829 and demagoguery, which he considers to be characteristic of the West. But at the same time, these encumbrances assure the private citizen a certain security. To seize a man on the street and deport him to a concentration camp is obviously an excellent means of dealing with an individual who displeases the administration; but such means are difficult to establish in countries where the only criminal is the man who has committed an act clearly defined as punishable in a specific paragraph of the law. Nazi and
671 Communist criminal codes are alike in that they efface the
829 frontier between penal and non-penal deeds—the first, by defining crime as any act directed against the interests of the German nation; the second, as any act directed against the interests of the dictatorship of the proletariat. What the man of the East calls the "lifeless formalism of the bourgeoisie" does, on the other hand, afford some guarantee that the father of a family will return home for supper instead of taking a trip to a region where polar bears thrive but human beings do not.

Nor is it easy in legally minded countries to adopt the use of scientific torture under which every man confesses with equal fervor whether he be innocent or guilty. Propaganda tries to convince the citizens of the people's democracies that law in the West is no more than a fiction subservient to the interests of the ruling classes. Perhaps it is a fiction, but it is not too subservient to the wishes of the rulers. If they want to condemn a man, they must sweat to prove him guilty in fact; his defense lawyers hide behind all the technicalities of the law; the case drags on through various appeals, etc. Obviously, crimes are committed under its cover, but so far Western law serves to bind the hands of the rulers as well as of the ruled which, depending on one's beliefs, may be a source of either strength or weakness.

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Americans, aware of the nature of their law, compare 829 ●
democracy to an awkward raft on which everyone paddles in a different direction. There is much hubbub and mutual abuse, and it is difficult to get everyone to pull together. In comparison with such a raft, the trireme of the totalitarian state, speeding ahead with outspread oars, appears indomitable. But on occasion, the totalitarian ship crashes on rocks an awkward raft can sail over.

New developments in the West are not easily ascertained in the people's democracies. In certain Western countries, above all in the United States, something has occurred which is without analogy in the preceding centuries: a new civilization has arisen which is popular, vulgar, perhaps in some respects distasteful to more "refined" people, but which assures its masses a share in the output of its machine production. It is true that what these masses rejoice in is frequently tawdry and superficial, and that they purchase it with hard labor. Yet a girl working in a factory, who buys cheap mass-production models of a dress worn by a movie star, rides in an old but nevertheless private automobile, looks at cowboy films, and has a refrigerator at home, lives on a certain level of civilization that she has in *common* with others. Whereas a woman on a collective farm near Leningrad cannot foresee the day when even her great-granddaughter will live on a level that approaches such an average.

What he refers to as the "stupidity" of the American masses, who are satisfied by the purely material advantages of this new civilization, is exceptionally irritating to the Eastern intellectual. Raised in a country where there was a definite distinction between the "intelligentsia" and the "people," he looks, above all, for ideas created by the "intelligentsia," the traditional fermenting element in revolutionary changes. When he meets with a society in which

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829 the "intelligentsia," as it was known in Central or Eastern Europe, does not exist, he has great difficulty in translating his observations into conceptual terms. The ideas he finds are clearly obsolete and far outdistanced by economic and technical developments. The purely pragmatic and empirical resolution of problems and the inability to swallow even a small dose of abstraction (whereas the German bourgeoisie, for example, had this ability in abundance) introduce unknowns into his calculations. If one regards these characteristics as signs of "backwardness" in comparison with Europe, then one must acknowledge that the "stupidity" which produced a technology immeasurably superior to that of Europe is not entirely a source of weakness.

In fact, if the impetus to perfect and use new discoveries has lost none of its drive, the credit lies with the West. The effort Japan made to overtake the West ended unsuccessfully; and Japan was beaten by the peace-minded and internally disunited United States of Roosevelt's day. Russia, copying Western models of automobiles, airplanes, jet engines, television sets, atom bombs and submarines, and such things as radar and penicillin, has now entered the race. The youngest generation in Eastern Europe, raised in the worship of Russia, is beginning to believe that she is taking the foremost place in the realm of science and technology. The older people consider such a belief absurd; but, given her untapped natural resources, a planned economy and the subsequent ability to allocate unlimited sums of money to scientific research and experimentation, they feel she may be well on the way toward supremacy.

This supposition seems to be refuted by the purely practical aims of contemporary Russian science for, as we know, the greatest discoveries are perfected in the course

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of long, disinterested work on the part of many scientists and often bear no immediate concrete results. It seems to be refuted, as well, by the insistence with which propaganda attributes most discoveries to the Russians even while they copy American construction, from bridges to motors, in the minutest detail. Such propaganda, pushed often to the point of the ridiculous, does not indicate a high degree of self-confidence. And such occurrences as the sale of Swedish machinery to the people's democracies under the stamp of Russian manufacture disproves its boastful claims. Nonetheless, this propaganda effort to destroy the Russian inferiority complex and to raise "technological morale" is proof of the importance the Center places upon this scientific race. Who knows to what results such a concentration of will may lead? Perhaps all that Russia needs is time.

Let us admit—and the Eastern or Central European will do so—that *at this moment* the superiority of the West in potential production, technology, and replacement of human hands by machines (which means the gradual effacing of the distinction between physical and mental work) is unquestionable. But, the Eastern intellectual asks, what goes on in the heads of the Western masses? Aren't their souls asleep, and when the awakening comes, won't it take the form of Stalinism? Isn't Christianity dying out in the West, and aren't its people bereft of all faith? Isn't there a void in their heads? Don't they fill that void with chauvinism, detective stories, and artistically worthless movies? Well then, what can the West offer us? Freedom *from something* is a great deal, yet not enough. It is much less than freedom *for something.*

While such questions are posed, actually they can be countered with others. American Communists (mostly

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● 829 the intellectually minded sons of middle-class or lower middle-classes families) complain about the spiritual poverty of the masses. They do not realize, however, that the Imperium they pine for is a combination of material poverty and lack of technology, plus Stalinism. Nor do they realize how fascinating it might be to try to imagine a combination of prosperity and technology, plus Stalinism. The new man of the Imperium is being remolded under the slogan of the struggle against poverty (which is simultaneously induced and conquered), and the advancement of technology (which is simultaneously demolished and rebuilt). If these two powerful motives were absent, what would happen? One suspects that the wheels of that gigantic machine would then turn in a vacuum. The stage of fully realized Communism is the "holy of holies." It is Heaven. One dare not direct one's eyes toward it. Yet if one dared to visualize that Paradise, he would find it not unlike the United States in periods of full employment. He would find (granting the alleviation of fear, which is improbable) the masses living physiologically, profiting from the material achievements of their civilization. But their spiritual development would meet an insuperable obstacle in a doctrine which considers its aim to be the liberation of man from material cares towards something which it, itself, defines as sheer nonsense.

These are utopian considerations which Western Communists may avoid, but their Eastern brothers do not. I remember one who said, "I do not want to live to see Communism realized, it will probably be so boring." When the great re-educational task is accomplished and the hated "metaphysical being" in man is utterly crushed, what will remain? It is doubtful whether Party imitations of Christian liturgy, and mass-like rites performed

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before portraits of the leaders will give the people perfect satisfaction.

More than the West imagines, the intellectuals of the East look to the West for *something*. Nor do they seek it in Western propaganda. The *something* they look for is a great new writer, a new social philosophy, an artistic movement, a scientific discovery, new principles of painting or music. They rarely find this *something*. The people of the East have already become accustomed to thinking of art and society on an organizational and mass scale. The only forms of culture in the West which attain such a scale are movies, best sellers, and illustrated magazines. No thinking person in the West takes most of these means of mass recreation seriously; whereas, in the East, where everything has a mass character, they take on the dignity of being the sole representatives of the "decadent culture of the West." It is easy to sneer at most films, novels, or articles (to say nothing of the fact that one is well-paid for such criticism and that it releases one from the more painful obligation of writing enthusiastically about the Center). Hence it is the pet activity of most Eastern journalists, and the influence that this sort of criticism has on its public is considerable.

The real cultural life of the West is very different. But even there the Eastern intellectual stumbles upon treacherous appearances, for he finds both imitation and innovation, decadence and vigor, advertised mediocrity and imperfectly recognized greatness. The social and intellectual currents, which he knows from his pre-war trips to the West, continue to exist and arouse his impatience as products of a stage he has left behind. Still these are the aspects that attract his attention, and not the new creative forces sending up shoots amid a forest of dead trees.

The gravest reproach leveled against Western culture is

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The gravest reproach leveled against Western culture is
829 that it is exclusive and inaccessible to the masses. This re-
517 proach is largely valid. Poetry, painting, and even music, shutting themselves up in ivory towers, become susceptible to numerous stylistic maladies. At the same time, however, their link with the everyday life of the people is considerably stronger than it seems to be at first glance. For example, avant-garde painting which is so "difficult" and "obscure" reaches a tremendous number of people through its influence on advertising, dress design, stage sets, interior decoration, and most important of all, perhaps, on the shape of universally used machines. In comparison with this, the "Soviet Empire" style, which is based on the painting on huge canvases of groups of dignitaries standing about in various positions and poses, is completely severed from everyday life. By destroying all experimentation in art, the Center confined its applied art (if one can speak of its existence at all) to a clumsy imitation of Western applied art which, however, is constantly renewed under the influence of experimental easel painting. When the cult of ugliness reigns in painting or sculpture and any daring passes as formalism, then applied art, cut off from its roots, is bound to prove sterile.

The multi-colored setting of Western life is subject to the law of osmosis. The average citizen of the West has no idea that a painter in a garret, a little-known musician, or a writer of "unintelligible" verse is a magician who shapes all those things in life which he prizes. Government officials give little thought to such matters for they consider them a waste of time. Since it is not a planned economy, the Western state cannot come to the aid of people working in the various arts. They go on, each pursuing his own chimera, sometimes dying of hunger; while nearby, wealthy men, not knowing what to do with

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their money, spend it on the latest whims of their benighted souls. 829 ● 517

This order of things revolts a person from the East. In his country, anyone who displays any talent is used. In the West, the same man would have very little chance of success. Western economy squanders talent to an incredible degree; and the few who do succeed owe their success as often to pure luck as to native ability. In the countries of the New Faith, the counterpart to this waste lies in the fact that the capacity to follow the political line is a selective criterion by which the most mediocre often attain the greatest renown. Nevertheless, the artist or scholar in the East earns his living more easily than his colleague in the West. Even though the pressure of the Method is burdensome, its material compensations are not to be scorned. Many musicians, painters, and writers who had the opportunity to flee to the West did not do so because they felt it was better to compose, paint, or write somehow or other, rather than to teach or work in a factory, with no time or energy left in which to perfect their true craft. Many of those who were abroad returned to their own countries chiefly for this reason.

Fear of the indifference with which the economic system of the West treats its artists and scholars is widespread among Eastern intellectuals. They say it is better to deal with an intelligent devil than with a good-natured idiot. An intelligent devil understands their mutual interests and lets them live by a pen, a chisel, or a brush, caring for his clients and making his demands. A good-hearted idiot does not understand these interests, gives nothing and asks nothing—which in practice amounts to polite cruelty.

To the people of the East it is axiomatic that the basic means of production should belong to the State, that they 829 471

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829 [47] should be regulated according to a planned economy, and that their proceeds should be used for hygienic, cultural, scientific, and artistic ends. It is naïve to seek partisans of capitalism in their midst. The *something* these people look for in the West is certainly not warmed-over watchwords of the French Revolution or the American War of Independence. They laugh at the argument that factories and mines should belong to private individuals. Their search for *something* springs from a more or less clear understanding of the fact that the New Faith is incapable of satisfying the spiritual needs of mankind, for its efforts in that direction have with inexorable regularity turned into caricature. If they were forced to formulate what they seek, they would undoubtedly reply that they want a system with a socialist economy, but one in which man need not struggle desperately in the snake-like embrace of the Method. So they seek some sign indicating that real cultural values can arise outside the scope of the Method. But they must be lasting values, geared to the future, and therefore not products of obsolete concepts. Anything less would serve merely to confirm the Method. The people in the countries of the New Faith know that *only* in the West can there appear works that will bear the seeds of hope for the future. Perhaps discoveries no less important than those of Marx or Darwin have already been perfected in the workrooms of isolated philosophers. But how does one find them?

The Eastern intellectual is a severe critic of everything that penetrates to him from the West. He has been deceived so often that he does not want cheap consolation which will eventually prove all the more depressing. The War left him suspicious and highly skilled in unmasking sham and pretense. He has rejected a great many books that he liked before the War, as well as a great many

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trends in painting or music, because they have not stood the test of experience. The work of human thought *should* withstand the test of brutal, naked reality. If it cannot, it is worthless. Probably only those things are worth while which can preserve their validity in the eyes of a man threatened with instant death.

A man is lying under machine-gun fire on a street in an embattled city. He looks at the pavement and sees a very amusing sight: the cobblestones are standing upright like the quills of a porcupine. The bullets hitting against their edges displace and tilt them. Such moments in the consciousness of a man *judge* all poets and philosophers. Let us suppose, too, that a certain poet was the hero of the literary cafés, and wherever he went was regarded with curiosity and awe. Yet his poems, recalled in such a moment, suddenly seem diseased and highbrow. The vision of the cobblestones is unquestionably real, and poetry based on an equally *naked* experience could survive triumphantly that judgment day of man's illusions. In the intellectuals who lived through the atrocities of war in Eastern Europe there took place what one might call the *elimination of emotional luxuries.* Psychoanalytic novels incite them to laughter. They consider the literature of erotic complications, still popular in the West, as trash. Imitation abstract painting bores them. They are hungry—but they want bread, not hors d'oeuvres.

Dialectical materialism awakens a response in them because it is *earthy*. They would willingly espouse a literature and art born outside the sphere of the Method, but on condition that it be earthy, strong, and healthy. If only they could find it! It is significant that everything in the West that is strong enough for their taste turns on questions of social structure and mass belief. Such books are frequently Stalinist, but even more often anti-Stalinist.

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● *829* A great many of them have read Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*. A few have become acquainted with Orwell's *1984*; because it is both difficult to obtain and dangerous to possess, it is known only to certain members of the Inner Party. Orwell fascinates them through his insight into details they know well, and through his use of Swiftian satire. Such a form of writing is forbidden by the New Faith because allegory, by nature manifold in meaning, would trespass beyond the prescriptions of socialist realism and the demands of the censor. Even those who know Orwell only by hearsay are amazed that a writer who never lived in Russia should have so keen a perception into its life. The fact that there are writers in the West who understand the functioning of the unusually constructed machine of which they themselves are a part astounds them and argues against the "stupidity" of the West.

Usually, what is strong in the West is purely negative. Its criticism of the New Faith is often accurate, but despite this, it points no way out, and introduces nothing to replace the Method. One can, it is true, say that it introduces a living man unashamed of his thoughts and capable of moving without the stilts supplied by citations from the authorities. To the Eastern intellectual, this is insufficient. One does not defeat a Messiah with common-sense arguments.

The Christian religion which is restricted or even exterminated in the countries of the New Faith always evokes a considerable (albeit unhealthy) amount of interest. Do Western Christians take the necessary advantage of their freedom? One is forced to the conclusion that they do not. Religion has become something in the nature of a vestigial custom, instances of which one finds in the folklore of various nations. Perhaps some pressure

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is needed if Christianity is to be reborn. The religious fervor of the Christians in the people's democracies would seem to indicate as much. One merely wonders if theirs isn't the piety of a mouse caught in a trap, and if it hasn't come just a bit too late.

The official order is to evince the greatest horror of the West. Everything is evil there: trains are late, stores are empty, no one has money, people are poorly dressed, the highly praised technology is worthless. If you hear the name of a Western writer, painter, or composer, you must scoff sarcastically, for to fight against "cosmopolitanism" is one of the basic duties of a citizen. Cosmopolitanism is defined as admiration for the (bourgeois) culture of the West. The term was invented in Moscow, and is not new in the history of Russia. Over a hundred years ago, Tsarist historians spoke with aversion of the "decadent West." It was in the decadent West of that time that Marx and Engels were writing, and it is from that West that it later proved necessary to import not only their work, but many other discoveries as well. In practice the fight against cosmopolitanism in the people's democracies takes the form of elaborate prescriptions indicating which Western writers of the past (those "progressive for their day") can be translated, what Western painting and music (usually created before 1870) is "healthy," etc.

No mattter how much trouble these detailed orders create for editors, publishers, and music directors, the "fight against cosmopolitanism" is not entirely without rational justification. Its motive in the Center is clear: too broad a scale of comparison is incompatible with the moral health of the citizens. In the people's democracies, which have been subjected to Western influence for centuries, it is a question of liquidating bad habits. You break a smoker of his habit by taking away his cigarettes.

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in turn surrender. Despite its apparent appeal to reason, the "club's" activity comes under the heading of collective magic. The rationalism of the doctrine is fused with sorcery, and the two strengthen each other. Free discussion is, of course, eliminated. If what the doctrine proclaims is as true as the fact that 2 × 2 equals 4, to tolerate the opinion that 2 × 2 equals 5 would be indecent.

From his first day in school, the young citizen receives an education based on this truth. There is a great difference between schools in the people's democracies and schools in the West, for example the schools I attended in pre-war Poland. My friends and I were exposed to a dual system of values. Mathematics, physics, and biology taught us scientific laws, and inculcated respect for a materialistic outlook inherited from the nineteenth century. History and Letters seemed to elude scientific laws, while the history of the Catholic Church and Apologetics cast doubt, though often naïvely, on what physics and biology taught. In the people's democracies, the materialistic outlook of the nineteenth century has been extended consistently to every subject; history and every branch of human creativity are presented as governed by unshakeable and *already known* laws.

In the nineteenth century, with the rise of literacy, brochures popularizing scientific theories made their appearance. Regardless of the intrinsic worth of these theories, we must grant that from the moment they take on a popular form they become something other than what they were as hypotheses of scientific research. For example, the simplified and vulgarized version of Darwin's theory of the origin of species and the struggle for existence is not the same concept that it was for Darwin or for his scholarly opponents. It takes on emotional coloration, and changes into an important sociological element.

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The leaders of the twentieth century, like Hitler for instance, drew their knowledge from popular brochures, which explains the incredible confusion in their minds. Evidently, there is no place in such digests for the humble remarks of true scientists who assure us that the laws discovered are hypothetical and relative to the method chosen and the system of symbols used. Vulgarized knowledge characteristically gives birth to a feeling that *everything* is understandable and explained. It is like a system of bridges built over chasms. One can travel boldly ahead over these bridges, ignoring the chasms. It is forbidden to look down into them; but that, alas, does not alter the fact that they exist.

Once the science of nature taught that a forest was a collective of trees governed by a few elementary laws. It seemed that if one cut out the forest and replanted it, after a definite period of years a new forest, exactly like the old, would appear. Today we know this is not so; a forest is an organism arising out of complicated interactions of mosses, soil, fungi, trees, and grasses. The moment these mosses and fungi are destroyed by the cutting out of the forest, the symbiotic pattern is disturbed and the new forest is a completely different organism from what might be expected by someone who ignored the sociology of plants. Stalinists have no knowledge of the conditions human plants need in order to thrive. Forbidding any research in this direction because such study contradicts orthodoxy, they bar mankind from the possibility of acquiring fuller knowledge of itself.

Dialectical materialism, Russian-style, is nothing more than nineteenth-century science vulgarized to the second power. Its emotional and didactic components are so strong that they change all proportions. Although the Method was scientific at its origins, when it is applied to

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humanistic disciplines it often transforms them into edifying stories adapted to the needs of the moment. But there is no escape once a man enters upon these convenient bridges. Centuries of human history, with their thousands upon thousands of intricate affairs, are reduced to a few, most generalized terms. Undoubtedly, one comes closer to the truth when one sees history as the expression of the class struggle rather than a series of private quarrels among kings and nobles. But precisely because such an analysis of history comes closer to the truth, it is more dangerous. It gives the illusion of *full knowledge;* it supplies answers to all questions, answers which merely run around in a circle repeating a few formulas. What's more, the humanities get connected with the natural sciences thanks to the materialistic outlook (as, for example, in theories of "eternal matter"), and so we see the circle closing perfectly and logically. Then, Stalin becomes the crowning point of the evolution of life on our planet.

The son of a worker, subjected to such an education, cannot think otherwise than as the school demands. Two times two equals four. The press, literature, painting, films, and theater all illustrate what he learns, just as the lives of saints and martyrs serve as illustrations of theology. It would be wrong to assert that a dual set of values no longer exists. The resistance against the new set of values is, however, emotional. It survives, but it is beaten whenever it has to explain itself in rational terms. A man's subconscious or not-quite-conscious life is richer than his vocabulary. His opposition to this new philosophy of life is much like a toothache. Not only can he not express the pain in words, but he cannot even tell you which tooth is aching.

Thanks to excellent means of vulgarization, unprepared people (i.e., those whose minds work feebly) are taught to

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• 829 reason. Their training convinces them that what is happening in the people's democracies is necessary, even if temporarily bad. The greater the number of people who "participate in culture"—i.e. pass through the schools, read books and magazines, attend theaters and exhibitions—the further the doctrine reaches and the smaller grows the threat to the rule of philosophers.

But some people, even with sufficient education, reason "badly." They are impervious to the influence of Hegelian philosophy. A chicken cannot be taught to swim; just so, those who belong to the social groups condemned to disappear cannot be convinced of the truth of dialectics. According to the Party, if these people were clearly aware of their situation, they would have to confess that there is no hope for them. Therefore they look for mental subterfuges. Those people are enemies. They must be ejected to the margins of society not because of what they do, but because of what they *are*. Despite the fact that their intentions may be subjectively good, their guilt has an *objective* character.

Dialecticians have to know the enemy's mentality. Studying the reactionary as a social type, they establish certain features by which he can be recognized. The reactionary, they argue, even though he be an educated man, is incapable of grasping the concept of the interdependence of phenomena. Therefore his political imagination is limited. A man who has been trained sociologically can deduce a whole line of reasoning as to the causes and consequences of every phenomenon. Like a paleontologist, he can divine a whole formation from a single fossil. Show him the verse of a poet from any country, a picture, even an item of clothing and he immediately fits it into a historical context. His line of reasoning may be false; nonetheless he sees everything within the sphere of a given

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civilization as a symptom, not an accident. The reactionary, incapable of this type of thinking, sees the world as a series of unrelated, parallel occurrences. 829 ●

Thus, Nazism was for the reactionary merely the result of the activity of Hitler and his clique; revolutionary movements are the effects of Moscow's machinations, etc. All the changes occurring in the people's democracies seem to him to resolve themselves into a question of superior force; if some miraculous accident were to remove this force, everything would return to "normal." He is like a man whose garden has been inundated by a raging river, and who expects to find his old flower beds intact after the waters subside. But a flooding river does not merely *exist;* it tears up and carries away whole banks of soil, fells trees, piles up layers of mud, overturns stones, until the garden of old becomes nothing more than a given number of square meters of unrecognizable land. The reactionary cannot grasp movement. His very language is static; his concepts, unchangeable, never renewed by observation. Laurel and Hardy once made a film in which Laurel, an American soldier in the First World War, is ordered to remain in the trench at his machine-gun post when the company moves to attack. Immediately thereafter the Armistice is signed, and in the resultant confusion he is forgotten. They find him twenty years later, his trench surrounded by a mountain of empty cans. He is still at his post, shooting at every commercial airplane that flies by. The reactionary, like Laurel, knows he must shoot, and he cannot realize that the plane is no longer what it was when he got his orders.

No matter how many books the reactionary reads about the dialectical method, he cannot understand its essence. Some little spring is missing in his mind. As a result he cannot properly evaluate human psychology. Dialecticians

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829 work on the premise that a man's mental and emotional life is in constant motion, that it is senseless to treat individuals as if they retained a certain stable, innate character in all circumstances. They know that by changing living conditions they change people's beliefs and reflexes. The reactionary is amazed by the changes people undergo. He awkwardly explains his friends' gradual conversion to the system as "opportunism," "cowardice," "treachery." Without such labels he feels lost. Reasoning on the principle of "either—or," he tries to divide the people about him into "Communists" and "non-Communists"; but such a differentiation loses all meaning in a people's democracy. Where dialectics shapes life whoever tries to resort to old-world logic must feel completely out of his depth.

Such misfortune always befalls the reactionary. The content suddenly flees from his concepts, and all he has left are empty words and phrases. His friends, who only a year ago used these words and phrases fondly, have rejected them as too general, too ill-defined, too remote from reality. He despairingly repeats "honor," "fatherland," "nation," "freedom," without comprehending that for people living in a changed (and daily changing) situation these abstractions take on a concrete and totally different meaning than before.

Because they so define a reactionary, dialecticians consider him a mentally inferior, and therefore not very dangerous, creature. He is no match for them. Once the propertied class is liquidated, the old intelligentsia (which was reactionary in these terms) can be brought to heel with no great difficulty. Its more vigorous representatives cross over to new ideological positions, while the rest lag further and further behind the transformations occurring all about them and so sink ever lower both socially and mentally.

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The new and the old intelligentsia no longer speak a common language. Reactionary tendencies exist in the peasants and the former petty bourgeoisie, but they are unexpressed. The masses are being educated by their new living conditions, and though they are discontented, with every month the mental distance between them and the program of the reactionaries increases. Émigré politicians help greatly to facilitate the work of the government. Ninety per cent of them are, according to the above definition, reactionaries. Their appeals and radio talks resemble poor Laurel's barrages at the airplanes. Their listeners are not displeased to hear them abuse a government they, too, dislike; still they cannot treat their formulations seriously. The discrepancy between these politicians' favorite words and the real situation is too clear; the superiority of the dialecticians, whose reasoning is always adapted to actuality, is too obvious. The reactionaries always lose by such comparison; the people's instinctive judgment is tinged with something like embarrassment, with shame that those who oppose dictatorship are not mentally up to its stature. Because man instinctively senses weakness, the people become ever more reluctant to side with the reactionaries. Thus, the feeling of fatalism grows stronger.

Rule over the minds of the masses, therefore, is not seriously threatened. Wherever it appears, intellectual energy can find only one outlet. It is a different matter, however, when one considers the emotional life of the masses and the terrible hatred that dominates it. This hatred cannot be explained on purely economic grounds. The Party senses that in this realm, which Marxism has studied least, surprises and real threats lie hidden.

Above all, there exists the question of religion. This problem still persists despite the many weak points in

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reflexes, was a deeply religious man. Moscow caused him no trouble over this because he was an eminent scientist and because he was old. The creator of the theory of conditioned reflexes—the very theory that constitutes one of the strongest arguments against the existence of some sort of constant called "human nature"! The defenders of religion maintain that this "human nature" cannot change completely; that gods and churches have existed over thousands of years and in all kinds of civilizations, and that one can expect this to be true of the future as well. What went on in Professor Pavlov's head if two systems of concepts, one scientific and one religious, existed simultaneously there?

The Party teaches that "existence shapes consciousness," that circumstances alter men. But it matters little whether religious drives result from "human nature" or from centuries of conditioning; they exist. During the war against Hitler, the Soviet Union had to dust off its priests as well as appeal to nationalistic feelings. When imminent death brings that moment of absurd revelation that *everything is senseless,* dialectical materialism suddenly discloses its mathematical structure. Man falls from the industriously built bridges. He prefers to surrender to the magic of icons.

In its own fashion, the Party too is a church. Its dictatorship over the earth and its transformation of the human species depend on the success with which it can channel irrational human drives and use them to its own ends. No, logical arguments are not enough. "Club" ceremonies, poetry, novels, films are so important because they reach deeper into the stratum on which the emotional conflict rages. No other church can be tolerated; Christianity is Public Enemy No. 1. It fosters all the skepticism of the masses as to the radical transformation of mankind. If,

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as the Gospel teaches, we must not do harm unto others, then perhaps we must not harm kulaks? If the highest glory does not belong to man, then perhaps worship of Lenin and Stalin is idolatry?

I have known many Christians—Poles, Frenchmen, Spaniards—who were strict Stalinists in the field of politics but who retained certain inner reservations, believing God would make corrections once the bloody sentences of the all-mighties of History were carried out. They pushed their reasoning rather far. They argue that history develops according to immutable laws that exist by the will of God; one of these laws is the class struggle; the twentieth century marks the victory of the proletariat, which is led in its struggle by the Communist Party; Stalin, the leader of the Communist Party, fulfills the law of history, or in other words acts by the will of God; therefore one must obey him. Mankind can be renewed only on the Russian pattern; that is why no Christian can oppose the one—cruel, it is true—idea which will create a new kind of man over the entire planet. Such reasoning is often used by clerics who are Party tools. "Christ is a new man. The new man is the Soviet man. Therefore Christ is a Soviet man!" said Justinian Marina, the Rumanian patriarch.

In reality, such Christians (even omitting men like Marina) perpetuate one of the greatest lies of all centuries. They renounce their faith but are ashamed to admit it. The contradiction between Christianity and Stalinist philosophy cannot be overcome. Christianity is based on a concept of *individual* merit and guilt; the New Faith, on *historical* merit and guilt. The Christian who rejects individual merit and guilt denies the work of Jesus, and the God he calls upon slowly transforms himself into History. If he admits that only individual merit and guilt

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exist, how can he gaze indifferently at the suffering of people whose only sin was that they blocked the path of "historical processes"? To lull his conscience he resorts to the thesis that a reactionary cannot be a good man.

Who is the reactionary? Everyone who opposes the inevitable historical processes, i.e. the Politburo police. The thesis of the "sin of the reactionary" is argued very cleverly: every perception is "oriented," i.e. at the very moment of perceiving we introduce our ideas into the material of our observations; only he sees reality truly who evaluates it in terms of the interests of the class that is the lever of the future, i.e. the proletariat. The writings of Lenin and Stalin teach us what the interests of the proletariat are. Whoever sees reality otherwise than as the proletariat sees it falsely; in other words, his picture of reality is deformed by the pressure of the interests of classes that are backward and so destined to disappear. Whoever sees the world falsely necessarily acts badly; whoever acts badly is a bad man; therefore the reactionary is a bad man, and one should not feel sorry for him.

This line of reasoning has at least one flaw—it ignores the facts. The pressure of an all-powerful totalitarian state creates an emotional tension in its citizens that determines their acts. When people are divided into "loyalists" and "criminals" a premium is placed on every type of conformist, coward, and hireling; whereas among the "criminals" one finds a singularly high percentage of people who are direct, sincere, and true to themselves. From the social point of view these persons would constitute the best guarantee that the future development of the social organism would be toward good. From the Christian point of view they have no other sin on their conscience save their contempt for Caesar, or their incorrect evaluation of his might.

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CHAPTER I

THE HISTORICAL PRECEDENT

1. *Marxist-Leninist Theory to the Eve of the Russian Revolution* (1848-1917)

In the little over a century that has passed since the proclamation of *The Communist Manifesto* in 1848, the attitude of Marxists toward the peasant and his role in society has undergone a series of marked shifts, ranging from Engels' caustic assertion that the peasant was the "barbarian of civilization" to Mao Tse-tung's frank reliance on a predominantly peasant army for the conquest of China.[1] Marx's own estimate of the socialist potential of the Russian *obshchina* (the traditional peasant commune) changed considerably in the last years of his life.[2] Lenin's well-known division of the peasantry into distinct and antagonistic segments stemmed from a more optimistic appraisal of the revolutionary role of the peasantry than had hitherto been accepted by Marxist theoreticians, and resulted after 1905 in the advocacy of a "democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants."[3] And although Lenin was always eloquent after the 1917 Revolution on the "error" of applying force to the middle peasantry, he set in motion the ponderous social machinery whose very life eventually depended upon the most forceful manipulation of the middle peasantry. The traditional Marxist glorification of urban, cosmopolitan values (so especially pronounced in a man like Trotsky) contrasts sharply with the more

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[1] For an excellent discussion of the ideological gymnastics by which Mao justified his turn from a proletarian to a peasant base in the early 1930's, see Benjamin Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao* (Cambridge, 1951), pp. 113-125.

[2] Kark Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Russian Menace to Europe*, (Blackstock and Hozelitz, editors), Glencoe, Illinois, 1952, pp. 218-26.

[3] The classic exposition of Lenin's thesis is contained in his "The Agrarian Question in Russia at the End of the 19th Century," in *Selected Works* (International Publishers, New York, 1943), Vol. 1, pp. 13-94.

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● 929 recent Communist policy of deriding "cosmopolitan" culture and cynically glorifying the folk and the land.[4]

This variegated and complex pattern of views indicates some of the pitfalls involved in an effort to generalize on Marxist agricultural theories. The great doctrinal flexibility implied in this pattern makes it imperative that Communist land policy be studied in the context of particular situations, for these variations reflect not merely *tactical* shifts but the changing character of Communism itself. This is not to suggest that Communist agrarian doctrine lacks a thread of historical continuity. It is to be found in the consistent conviction that the land problem is secondary to the basic urban and industrial developments in society. This attitude derives from the fact that the Communist Parties have always been urban in character, concerned with the advancement of urban groups, first the industrial proletariat, and then, in post-revolutionary times, the Party-industrial bureaucracy.[5] Consequently, Marxist solutions to the agrarian problem have been shaped largely by needs of the urban group to which the Communists attached themselves, not by the needs of the peasants or of the land. Within this general social framework the various Marxist formulations on the land question were enunciated over the years.

The Traditional 19th Century Marxist View

When Engels termed the peasant the "barbarian of civilization," Marx himself cited the epithet with approval; and in his own words he was more contemptuous still, terming the peasantry a "sack of potatoes," a class whose very way of life constituted a brake on human progress, and whose lack of social cohesion and drive made them incapable of forceful political action and vulnerable to reactionary ideologies.[6] Marx's greatest scorn was reserved for the East European peasantry (chiefly Slavic) whose half-mystical attachment to the land and folk-directed culture led them to serve the most conservative interests of Europe. He assigned major blame for the failure of the Hungarian revolution of 1848 to the "reactionary" Croatian and Russian peasants who had "betrayed" their own best interests in following their leaders and crush-

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[4] See Leon Trotsky, *Literature and Revolution* (New York, 1926), for a full exposition of the early Marxist identification with urbanism.

[5] The discussion of these trends in David Mitrany's *Marx Against the Peasant* (Chapel Hill, 1951) is excellent.

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 7-21.

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ing Kossuth.[7] In mid-nineteenth century Europe Marx's entire sympathies were with the energetic city bourgeoisie and the rising proletariat.[8]

Consequently it was clear to most 19th century Marxists that until radical changes had transformed the land, the peasantry would continue to be an anomaly in the developing industrial society. The prospect of radical change seemed to be offered in the early 19th century trend toward amalgamation of independent farm holdings under capitalist, or *Junker* ownership; and the day was foreseen when the growth of the massive latifundia would have converted the once backward and provincial European peasant into a class-conscious and alert proletarian, capable of being organized along modern political lines. Furthermore, it was imagined that in conjunction with the proletarian revolution the small peasant holding, that "most primitive mode of exploitation," would give way to efficient, modernized production units capable of direct transformation in the crucible of revolution into "vital socialist forms."

The Modified Marxist View

At the close of the 19th century it became increasingly evident that agrarian conditions in Europe had not developed in the Marxist-prescribed manner. On the contrary, land reform and the abolition of serfdom, even in such backward regions as Russia and the Balkans, had created an increasing class of property-conscious peasants. The task of reconciling these facts with the traditional belief in the historical obsolescence of the peasantry was critical for Marxists.[9] In France, Germany, and the Netherlands "reformist"

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[7] Marx wrote: "Except for the Poles, the Russians, and at best the Slavs in Turkey, no Slavic people has a future, for the simple reason that all Slavs lack the most basic historic, geographic, political and industrial prerequisites for independence and vitality." (Blackstock and Hoselitz, p. 72). And Engels on this point: "Now you may ask me whether I have no sympathy whatever for the small Slavic peoples, and remnants of peoples. . . . In fact, I have damned little sympathy for them." (*Ibid.*, p. 119).

[8] Thus Marx rejoiced at the victory of the advanced and enterprising Americans over the Mexicans in the war of the 1840s, identified himself with the North over the South in the American Civil War, favored British imperialism over Russian imperialism in Central Asia, and supported a German victory in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. In those situations where the "burgeoisie" acted with great boldness in overthrowing antiquated forms and empires Marx celebrated its victories in lavish fashion.

[9] See Mitrany, pp. 13-23, for discussion of the problems facing the Socialist movement in the late 19th century as it attempted to come to grips with land changes.

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829 theoreticians sought to revise the traditionally harsh view of the peasant, and contended that the victory of "socialism" did not hinge on complete destruction of the peasant way of life. The rise of peasant political consciousness which accompanied these developments had necessitated revaluation even from Marx and Engels who, for example, came to see a limited capacity for growth in the Russian *obshchina*. Engels went so far as to concede that revolution need not necessarily be accompanied by the expropriation of the property-conscious peasant, but that socialization of the land might follow only when the peasant was convinced of its benefits.[10]

The Leninist Development

It is probably no accident that the single European Socialist party to develop a program which took some account of growing peasant demands was the only one to meet with revolutionary success. That such a program was developed was more than a tribute to Lenin's political genius; equally important was the fact that Russia possessed both a proletariat large and concentrated enough to generate an advanced Socialist party and a peasantry so enormous that revolutionary tactics without its cooperation were, in the long run, unthinkable.

Lenin's initial opinion of the Russian peasantry was based on the classical Marxist conceptions expounded by his mentor Plekhanov.[11] But the swift movement of events in the countryside at the turn of the century made Lenin increasingly aware of the revolutionary potential of the Russian peasantry and he sought to turn the growing peasant hatred of the land-owning class to his own ends. Thus, in *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* (1899), he had propounded the standard Marxist thesis that further pauperization, and so proletarianization, of the peasantry was a necessary condition to revolution in the countryside; but the active participation of sections of the peasantry in the 1905 Revolution changed Lenin's mind. "Our mistake," he observed after the 1905 Revolution, "consisted in underestimating the breadth and depth of the democratic, or rather bourgeois-democratic, movement among the peasantry. It is stupid to persist in this mistake now when the

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[10] See Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Izbranniye Proizvedenila* (Moscow, 1948), Vol. II, p. 415.

[11] A brief discussion of Plekhanov's ideas may be found in N. Popov, *Outline History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (Moscow, 1934), Vol. 1, pp. 18-28.

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Revolution has taught us so much."[13] The lessons of 1905 were summarized in *The Agrarian Question* (1908). In this work he postulated two possible courses for Russian agriculture: The "Prussian road" of government-sponsorship of the "predatory" kulak farmers, and the "American road" of the complete destruction of all feudal traces and the creation of a small-holding, independent peasantry. Lenin's readiness to support the "American road" aligned him with peasant demands for increased land and the destruction of all feudal remnants.[13]

However, Lenin cautioned, as a Social Democrat he could not assure the peasants that he would forever support their property-conscious demands, and a "socialist agriculture" remained his final goal. Thus Lenin foresaw the inevitable clash of interests between the peasant and proletarian revolutions which Engels had anticipated when he wrote:

> We say frankly that, given the prejudices flowing from their economic position, education, and isolated way of life . . . we can bring the peasants to our side only by making promises which we know beforehand we shall not be able to keep.[14]

These promises were made and temporarily honored by the first victorious Socialist party. It was not, however, until the eve of the 1917 Revolution, when the vast and spontaneous peasant rebellion convulsed the Russian countryside, that Lenin moved to cement the alliance between the peasant and proletarian revolutions. The working agreement beteween the two forces was based on common opposition to the land-owning classes (allies of the "bourgeois" government which the Bolsheviks sought to destroy) and was made possible by Lenin's temporary acquiescence to the peasant's own land program as formulated by the Social-Revolutionary Party. "These reforms are not our idea," Lenin said, but "we support them because they are demanded by the overwhelming majority of the peasants."[15] The Bolsheviks did not administer, or even attempt to oversee, the expropriation of the Russian landed estates in the revolutionary period; but their seizure of power in November 1917 permitted the militant peasantry to complete the agrarian revolution begun many months before.

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[13] Quoted by Bertram Wolfe, *Three Who Made a Revolution* (New York, 1948), p. 364.
[13] Lenin, *Selected Works* (Moscow, 1934-39), Vol. I, pp. 84-91.
[14] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Izbranniye Proizvedenia*, (Moscow, 1948), Vol. II, p. 414.
[15] Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. III, p. 200.

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Satellite industrial program. The oustanding case in point is, of course, Hungary, whose extremely poor harvest of 1952 provided the impetus which paved the way for the crisis of 1953.[19]

2. The reliance upon slow economic strangulation rather than direct administrative force in collectivization inevitably meant greater reliance on the voluntary will of the peasantry than was necessary in the Soviet collectivization drive. Therefore, the regimes had to take some account of the individual tastes of the peasantry. The variety of intermediate types of collective, the special privileges granted kolkhoz members, reflect the Communist desire to soften the impact of collectivization.[20] The strenuous efforts made to demonstrate to the peasant the economic superiority of collectivism were also part of this effort.

This policy made collectivization possible but at the same time detracted from the very usefulness originally intended for the collectivized farms; that is, the effort to render the collectives attractive to the independent peasant (limited as they were) did not facilitate exploitation of the peasants which was their major economic justification. As was evident from the analysis presented in Chapted IV, the degree of exploitation of the "Socialist sector" was not much greater than the exploitation of the private sector. The difference was, in any case, smaller than that achieved in the Soviet Union, where a prolonged period of persuasion and intra-peasantry discrimination had been unnecessary.

4. *The East European Peasant*

Peasant resistance is a social force extremely difficult to measure either quantitatively or qualitatively. It expresses itself in many forms and guises, both in open revolt and passive resistance. This is partly because peasant sentiment rarely expresses itself in organizational form but more commonly in individual economic acts. In modern history, governments have found it difficult to elicit fanatical loyalty from the peasant; at best he is obedient. For the same reasons, the peasant has rarely been drawn into the organized revolutionary movements of the time. He has succumbed to few

[19] There was, of course, other factors involved in the Hungarian agricultural crisis of 1953 (see above pp. 109-10).

[20] Mention should be made here of Communist efforts throughout the sphere to flatter the peasant by a superficial glorification of his traditional dance, costumes, handiwork, and other expressions of the peasant culture which once graced the covers of pre-World War II East European tourist guides.

565 of the sophisticated slogans of modern politics and tends to judge
829 governments in terms of provincial and pragmatic considerations
668 which cannot be encompassed in the romantic slogans of either the State or the Revolution. For a fleeting moment in 1917, the peasants of Russia involved themselves in the maelstrom of a proletarian revolution. Between the wars they gave occasional support to genuinely peasant parties, but invariably their interest lagged or the parties betrayed them. Otherwise, the peasants have in general been passive rather than active participants in 20th Century political history.

The vast uprising of the Russian peasants in 1917-18 was probably their greatest show of strength in the 20th century, and certainly absorbed more peasant energies and resentments than either the 1907 Romanian rebellion or the Bulgarian peasant victories of the early 1920s. But their victory was short-lived, and was achieved at a tremendous price. The cataclysmic forces of the Russian Revolution so shattered the old structure of both countryside and city that the gains the peasant made remained at the mercy of terrible forces. The destruction of traditional institutions which occurred in 1917-21 in defense of the Revolution prepared the land for the collectivization onslaught 10 years later.

The peasants of Eastern Europe have not participated in such a revolution, and their institutions knew no such cataclysmic overturn. Furthermore, East European peasants have had a longer tradition of private property and as a result were less capable of revolutionary opposition to their oppressors but more capable of that type of passive resistance which in the long run is most effective. Russian peasants might destroy the livestock in defiance of the Bolshevik cadres but East European peasants could more easily sabotage the plan by day-to-day non-cooperation. The revolutionary traditions of the Russian peasantry made possible greater heroism, but no greater improvement of their economic situation. The less militant traditions of the East European peasantry (in part the consequence of more humane governments) guaranteed that there would be no repetition of the victories of 1917-18, nor any exact repetition of the terrible defeats of 1929-32.

There are many national factors affecting the total picture: the proximity of peasant victory in Hungary of 1945-46; the power of the Catholic Church in rural Poland; the relative prosperity of the Czech farmers; the communal traditions of the Bulgarian and

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Yugoslav peasants; the special position which Romania occupies in the Soviet empire. These differences are important, and explain many of the variations within the framework of agricultural policy. But these variations fall into that historical experience which distinguishes East European peasantry from its Russian counterpart. These historical differences are of the utmost importance in explaining the failure of the East European Communists to emulate successfully the Soviet example.

5. *The Communist Role in Eastern Europe*

The Communist Parties of Eastern Europe consider themselves progressive forces of the area. In agriculture, they assert that by lifting the backward peasantry out of its traditional lethargy and provincialism, they are performing a service for the peasants and the entire society. The opposition of the peasantry to Communist plans for the rationalization of the land stems from stubborn allegiance to outmoded customs and habits. Vulko Chervenkov, the Bulgarian Premier, gave the classical formulations on this point:

> The Bulgarian peasant has two souls. One is the love of work and the other is the sense of private ownership. His spirit of private ownership brings him close to the capitalist. His spirit of work brings him close to the working class. Therefore the peasant is hesitant. We Communists, through our tactics and by the collective method, should kill their spirit of private ownership and build our socialist world.[19]

It is precisely this conception of the Communist role in Eastern Europe which the material gathered together here calls into question.

No doubt it is partly true that peasant resistance to collectivization is based on their passionate attachment to the land they till and own. But as has been pointed out, the major issue in the struggle between the Communists and the peasants was the question of the *distribution* of the fruits of the land, rather than the more abstract question of conflicting ideologies.

The peasants fight not only to protect their ancient traditions but even more to protect their economic rights, and they frequently employ the ancient traditions in defense of their own economic interests. The Communists, for their part, struggle against these traditions not merely out of doctrinaire antagonism but because these customs stand in the way of further exploitation of the

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[19] *Rabotnichesko Delo* (Sofia) September 9, 1953.

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829 peasants and their full incorporation into the state-industrial machinery.[20]

423 Like the great land reforms which followed the First and Second World Wars, the Communist "solution" to the land problem of Eastern Europe is no real solution at all, and since it does not attack the problem at its roots, is not intended to be one. Rather, like the great reforms, the Communist agricultural program is only a means of redistributing the products of the land to suit new political realities. The chief difference between the two movements lies in the fact that while the reforms redistributed the wealth among the peasants themselves, collectivization was designed to redistribute a portion of the national wealth in favor of the new urban Communist bureaucratic class.

[20] The working class has been already incorporated into that structure. But that does not mean that, despite the absence of traditional ties, they are any less opposed to the Communist regimes than the peasants. On the contrary, as the East German and Czechoslovak revolts of mid-1953 demonstrated, the workers are likely to play the leading role in anti-Communist agitation and revolt.

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or the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans from their homes during 1945, an action flagrantly in violation of the principles for which the war against Nazism had been fought?

Against this background one must set the figures of those who, whether of the clergy or of the laity, lived and preached the law of charity. Nowhere more than amongst such men—Princes of the Church, professors, men of affairs, labor leaders, simple religious, and common people—was this law manifest. It is imperative that their memory be not obscured, now that so mighty an army of the mean and servile has arisen. Let us note what we shall have mournful occasion to repeat again and again. Marxism, which had its rise in the concern of intellectuals for the worker, and which formulated that concern in terms of a materialist version of the Hegelian dialectic, has come round with Stalin to the view that the laboring man must have no intellectuals on his side. To suppress élites has become the cornerstone of the totalitarian theory of practical politics. That is why the peoples in chains retain their passions and their weaknesses, their hatreds and their greed, while those who might give them counsel or reasons for constraint are dead or silent.

Then, too, there was the presence and also the example of the Ghetto. Place of reputed ignominy, of poverty, of rasping and grasping humanity, it was nevertheless awesomely, breathtakingly beautiful when the Sabbath eve descended upon it. Prayer became not so much what was engaged in but rather that which swept the world aside and created a wonderland of peace and holiness. One knew that in all the shabby little rooms which sheltered human beings in their wretchedness a fire had been lighted which had gleamed for thousands of years—the same leaping flame which had set the bush ablaze for Moses and had kindled the light that danced before the Ark of the Covenant. And though the vision of sanctification which now

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tion of separate states. Therewith a tide of Liberalism merged with the currents of upsurging tribal nationalism to create the pattern of conflict which was later to prove so advantageous to the totalitarians. Czech nationalism, having in Thomas Masaryk a brilliantly effective standard-bearer, seemed at first blush to usher in a new era of democratic and progressive social thought. It soon became obvious, however, that the autonomism of the Czechs—which led at the outset even to the establishment of a National Church—would of necessity engender comparable feelings in the breasts of the other peoples in the Czechoslovak Republic. The Slovaks rallied round their own traditions of language and culture, and swiftly but surely became committed to a quest for autonomy which found a temporary though unsatisfactory haven under Hitler. Among Sudeten Germans feeling was almost as strong and led ultimately to the fateful formation of a political party which advocated union with Germany. Nor was the situation different elsewhere. Yugoslavia was plagued from the beginning by deep and bitter conflict among the Serbs, the Croats, and the Slovenes.

In Hungary a violent Communist revolution, spearheaded in late 1918 by Béla Kun, ruled for a time by bloodshed. But ere long this uprising, which had very little popular support, was put down; reaction set in, and a dictatorial government was established after it had compiled its own catalogue of excesses. Here was made manifest, probably for the first time, how significant the stability of religious groups could prove to be. Not only did they temper noticeably the excesses of extremists, but under the leadership of great churchmen they began to build organizations dedicated to social improvement. It is also true that bitter experience under the Béla Kun regime made Hungary one of the most anti-Communist countries of Europe.

And so, as the turbulence engendered by the war apparently subsided, it seemed probable that a period of relative security

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Catholic and Protestant, to accept one of the most flagrant here- 738
sies of all time.

There can be no doubt that Nazism dealt a crippling blow to religion, not only by reason of the attack on elites—men and women of intellectual status and forceful character, able to lead the people—but also because of the widespread perversion of youth which resulted from the activities of the Hitlerjugend and similar organizations. It is true that Hitler's attack on the Church lacked both the decisiveness and the skill which we have since come to identify with Communism. The Nazi intention was, however, to launch such an attack as soon as victory had been gained. Himmler's plans, as we study them in retrospect, bear the stamp of his diseased romantic imagination; but it may well be that in an hour of world-shattering victory he could have put them into effect. Fortunately there was no such triumph. Even so the scars left on the spirit of Europe by years of unrestrained and vicious Nazism will not be healed over for a long time to come. Thus, the Communist advance 829 ●
westward after the close of the war was aided on the one hand by the corrosion of spirit which was a bequest of Hitler, and on the other hand by the belief, prevalent in many quarters, that Sovietism was the opposite of German tyranny and was friendly to democratic institutions. This was unfortunately accepted as something close to self-evident truth in our own United States, so that there is little reason why we should wonder at the illusions of Europeans.

Stalin's road into one of the heartlands of the Christian faith was at all events open. The second stage in the passion of sorely tried peoples was to begin. How feeble the surviving elements of Liberalism, counted upon sometimes to impede the Russian dictator's progress, had become, is amply demonstrated by the fate of Eduard Beneš. Less imaginative and resourceful, less courageous or determined, few statesmen have seemed to be,

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829 though the verdict is not wholly just. There remained no intellectual obstacle save the stark Christian faith to one of the most ruthless powers humanity has known.

000 Accordingly we shall glance briefly at the historical relations between Church and State in Russia in order to gain insight into the formation of Soviet policy on the religious question. It is not easy to do so. Russia, which possesses a great literature, has had no school of cultural historians; and, though many noble refugee scholars—Berdyaev, Timasheff, Stepan, von Eckardt, Gurian among them—have written significantly on cultural topics, persons who do not know Russia are hard put to follow the convolutions of a history very different from that of our own peoples. There is, however, a line of development which one can observe with reasonable ease if one asks a few questions. What were the relations between Western Christianity and Russia? When and how did the Russian Church become subservient to the Czars? How did that Church confront the rising strength of Bolshevism? Did it make its peace with Stalin?

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779 Christianity came to Kiev from Byzantium in the year 988. This does not, however, mean that the Russians were deeply committed to the Eastern Church in contradistinction to Rome. Missionaries came from both centers of Christendom, and there seems to have been little difference in the welcome accorded them; but at the time of the occupation of Constantinople by the Crusaders in 1204 a change had set in. Excesses committed by uproarious defenders of the Cross deeply embittered the Greeks, and some of this feeling was communicated to the Russians. The charge that Rome was the seat of an archheretical Papacy, prevalent in Greek writing of the time, found an echo in Kiev. Then came the Mongol invasion of Russia, followed by a period of occupation lasting two hundred and fifty years. Autocratic rule by the Mongolian masters deepened

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175 The great Councils to which we have referred opened in a
795 spirit of optimism, despite the nationalistic bickering to which
641 Europe was then subject. The Greeks were in a conciliatory mood, due largely to their need of Western allies against the followers of Mohammed, but they arrived in Europe at a time of bitter conflict over whether a Council took precedence over the Pope. The Decree of Union did not satisfy the great mass of the Greeks, even though the overwhelming majority of their ecclesiastical representatives assented to it in accordance with the wishes of the Emperor. The only positive result was the formation of the Greek Churches in union with Rome, usually called the Uniate Churches. In Russia, as we have seen, the Czar vetoed any plan of reunion.

But the great dream of reunion did not die, and after World War I it was revived especially by Pope Pius XI, who had intimate personal knowledge of conditions in Eastern Europe from the high vantage point of the Holy See. Institutions under the auspices of the Papacy were established to promote the achievement of One Fold and One Shepherd. At the same time the Protestant Ecumenical Council likewise began to search for ways in which to draw the Eastern Churches into union, with the Churches bound together under its roof. These efforts were not wholly useless, but it was again obvious that the disunity of the Christian West had puzzled and confused rather than attracted the East.

175 Meanwhile great changes had taken place. The Papacy was
829 compelled to reckon with the rise of secularism, which swept
795 across Eastern Europe from the West during the nineteenth century. Medieval ecclesiastical institutions were widely identified with feudalism; and in addition new intellectual and scientific movements gave rise to a widespread conviction that religion was in itself a barrier to the development of the good, or at least the prosperous, society. The attack on feudalism

[1. Councils of Ferrara and Florence, 15th cent. - Analyst.]

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which became the great French Revolution of 1789 was also a rebellion against the privileged Church; and after the rise of a capitalistic society the estrangement of the poor from religion became the dominant fact in the cultural history of Western Europe. Hegelian philosophy—combining a doctrine of the constantly mobile and shifting Mind with a theory of the State as the sole primordially ordained center of permanence in an otherwise impermanent world—came to prominence at a time when dissatisfaction with Liberalism (in the continental sense) was breeding myths of political utopianism among the masses. Of these myths the strongest, temporarily at least, was the Marxist faith, rooted in a class-conscious usurpation of Hegelian thought. Yet observers who looked deeply into the wellsprings from which the intellectual behavior of the time was fed could see that a creed drastically counter to Marxism was arising in many different places, almost spontaneously. This might be termed dynamic traditionalism—that is, investing the past of man with sacredness and subsequently selecting from it forces and figures that could be made objects of the cult, in which the concept of human sacrality might receive a quasi-liturgical form. Perhaps such a force might be race, or classical antiquity, or one of the urges which some historians read into the Renaissance. To the exponents of dynamic traditionalism, the Catholic Church often seemed to be one great force among many others. For did it not have discipline, as Charles Maurras observed, and a heritage of beauty ranging all the way from the austerity of Cluny to the gorgeous splendor of St. Peter's?

This traditionalism tempted many Catholics—was indeed a far greater peril to orthodoxy than even the antecedent, all-pervading Liberalism. That no doubt had led not a few to believe that the Christian creed was outmoded and so could be made serviceable only by adapting it, more or less subtly, to the assumptions of modern scientific and philosophical

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829 795 thought; but dynamic traditionalism transformed the Church of the Master into a genteel and eminently historical institution, with the role of conferring the august dignity of an assumed other world upon the power politics of the here-and-now. The robes of prelates fitted very well into the pageantry of the State, and so there were not a few who thought that a benediction might well be expended upon Nazis and Fascists, to the accompaniment of incense and carefully selected items of Gregorian chant, if only their grandiose parades would include a section devoted exclusively to the clergy. It may be said parenthetically that today no one knows whether the Russia of Stalin was a devotee of Marxism or of dynamic traditionalism. Had Stalin donned the robes of Ivan, who could have told which heresy he was espousing?

175 793 795 A succession of great Popes, possibly the most remarkable in the long annals of the Church, accepted the challenge. Leo XIII, intellectual and aristocratic, recognized the necessity for demonstrating to the workers that they were not at present inside the realms of a Christian civilization that doomed them to a condition of perennial peonage. His successor, Pope Pius X, left to the world the conviction that the Church is the servant of peace; and Benedict XV committed all Catholics to the support of an international order. In 1922 began the vigorous pontificate of Pius XI, distinguished for the world-wide scope of his interests and sympathies. Whereas during several centuries the See of Rome had worn an air of Roman provincialism, the tireless leadership of this learned, mountain-climbing North Italian imparted to it a new tinge of contemporaneousness and cosmopolitanism. The Vatican ended its old quarrel with the Italian State over the Papal territories, even though at some risk of seeming to assent to the dictatorship of Mussolini. It acquired a radio station, an Americanized library system, and even a scientific academy. Through adroit and conciliа-

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tory diplomatic activity agreements were reached with the new states of Europe as well as with many countries overseas concerning relationships between Church and State. In ways which were often startlingly new, the laity was associated with the clergy in the work of the Church; and social reform was advocated, in the spirit of a great Encyclical letter restating and re-forming the principles of the moral teaching concerning society which are implicit in the Catholic tradition. All these things were then kept alive under the next Pope, Pius XII.

It is part of the universal tragedy of our time that so very much of what seemed so promising should have been engulfed by the fearful upheavals which, originating in Europe, for a time threatened to shatter the foundations of human society everywhere. In Adolf Hitler appeared the demagogic voluntarist who gave the heresy of dynamic traditionalism its most drastic and frightening formulation. Meanwhile, in nearly every other country Marxism became the gospel of the dissident intellectuals, who often were able to commit to their view sections of the working population, indeed not infrequently unwilling sections. Yet Pius XI had felt, almost from the moment he assumed Pontificate, that a great and shattering storm was brewing in Europe. That is why he labored so vigorously for the development of the Church in other parts of the world, including Africa and Asia. He took steps to forestall the disaster, opposing the mighty heresies whenever he could even though sometimes the infection had spread so far among Catholics themselves that—as in the case of the *Action française*—Princes of the Church did not concur with him.

In Eastern Europe the position of the Church was inevitably and critically affected by inability to arrive at a *modus vivendi* with the Bolshevik government. The lengthy story of efforts to reach an agreement cannot be told here; but it may be recalled that until the summer of 1924 a Papal Relief Mission was ac-

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2 The Liberal Tradition

HUBERT RIPKA

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This essay will endeavor to show that liberalism has its own tradition in the countries of Eastern Europe and that the liberal regimes set up in this area succumbed not so much to internal factors as to the unfavorable international situation. In other words, the development of liberalism in this region between the two world wars was a part of the course of liberal democracy in Europe as a whole.

I

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It is necessary first to define liberalism. This force will not be interpreted here as a political ideology of certain political parties or social classes. Although, historically speaking, liberalism has been identified most often with the so-called middle classes, its ideology has a far wider basis. It aims above and beyond the demands of one social class to a political and social order of all society which is based on liberty, equality, and the reign of law. It is in this sense that liberalism will be dealt with in this essay.

It would be impossible to understand the liberalism of any one country if it were discussed only in terms of the

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political parties which profess liberalism or which, more precisely, adopt only those elements of liberalism which further their own political aims. Regarded in this light, England, where the Liberal Party is the weakest among the principal political parties, would not be a liberal country. Similarly, in France, Italy, and Belgium, liberalism has not been limited to the so-called liberal parties. The situation was the same in the countries of Eastern Europe.

In Czechoslovakia there were only two liberal parties (the National Democrats and the National Socialists), but liberal ideology greatly influenced the Agrarian Party, the Social Democrats and, to a large extent, the Czech Catholics. In Poland, the National Democratic Party was, at first, the only party to accept any of the liberal principles (it endorsed particularly economic liberalism), but the Polish Agrarian and Socialist parties were influenced strongly by liberalism. In Hungary, the Liberal Party was small and without any influence. A similar situation prevailed in Bulgaria, but liberal aspirations for greater freedom and for more civil rights were not limited to members of the Liberal Party. In Rumania, the Liberal Party was very strong, but it was hardly more "liberal" than Maniu's National Peasant Party. In Yugoslavia, the Radicals and the Democrats who found their support chiefly among the Serbians and the Slovene liberals stood for certain principles of political and economic liberalism, but it is a recognized fact that the Croatian and Serbian Agrarians, as well as the Radicals and the Democrats, fought in the name of liberal democracy against dictatorship. In Bulgaria, the Agrarians of Stambolisky represented a party devoted to democratic principles.

The position and influence of liberalism in Eastern Europe is best illustrated by T. G. Masaryk. His own political party was numerically insignificant but Masaryk, as the most prominent liberal in this region, influenced not only the

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665 Czechs and the Slovaks, but also neighboring peoples, par-
●829 ticularly the Yugoslavs. A large proportion of the Croatian, Serbian, and Slovene politicians from the Yugoslav provinces that had formerly formed a part of Austria-Hungary were educated before the First World War in the school of Masaryk's liberal thought. Among these men was Stjepan Radić, who later was to become leader of the Croatian Peasant Party.

829 Liberalism in Eastern Europe, and this is true for other
565 countries as well, cannot be identified only with the so-called middle classes or with supporters of the free enterprise system. The middle classes, with the exception of those in Czechoslovakia and Austria, were not numerically or economically strong or influential. The capitalistic economic order was strongly defended, not only by the liberals, but by pronounced conservatives among whom were those who began to support authoritarian regimes in the 'thirties. The peasants, insofar as they did not adhere politically to parties of the conservative right, were usually very devoted and often even radical supporters of democracy. Similarly, a great number of socialistically oriented workers and intelligentsia, in supporting political democracy, were influenced by ideas of liberalism. Many liberals, usually those belonging to the intelligentsia, were sympathetic to socialistic tendencies. This socialistically-minded liberalism, which had its counterpart in France among the Radical Socialists or the so-called "Independent" Socialists, and in Britain among the British Fabians, was best represented in Czechoslovakia by T. G. Masaryk and his disciple, Eduard Beneš. Both men, although they rejected Marxism, accepted many ideas of the socialistic school of thought. This liberal socialistic orientation was the basis of the Czechoslovakian party of National Socialists whose adherents were chiefly recruited from the small bourgeoisie, the intelligentsia, and the workers. The National Socialists endeavored to combine liberal-

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ism with socialism, in the belief that political democracy should be accompanied by "economic democracy." 829 565

The importance and influence of liberalism in this region did not, therefore, rest with any particular political parties or social groupings which gave themselves the liberal label or which explicitly professed liberal principles. The influence of liberalism lay in the force of the liberal ideology which exercised influence on the whole national community.

It is often held today, due to the conception of liberalism held in Anglo-Saxon countries and, to some extent, in other countries of Western Europe, that the influence of liberalism in the Eastern European countries was not of great importance. This is accounted for by a theory that the so-called middle classes were weak and that the popular masses, predominantly peasant, had a low social and cultural standing. Czechoslovakia is cited as an example to support this analysis. It is said that Czechoslovakia was able to maintain her democracy because she had an influential and prosperous middle class and because the cultural level of her population was approximately the same as the cultural level of the West. There is no doubt that a weak middle class and a low social standard among the popular masses were serious handicaps to the development of liberal democracy in the agricultural countries of this region. Liberal democracy required, from the social and economic points of view, not uniformity and equalization, but a diversified and well-balanced social structure and an economy with a fair degree of balance between industry and agriculture. Above all, liberal democracy required the "liberal spirit," a combination of a desire for freedom, a devotion to political and social rights, and an eagerness for justice. The existence of liberal democracy, therefore, cannot be defined in terms of social and economic requirements alone. 829 565 511

In support of this premise, several examples can be cited. Before the First World War, in the small Serbia of King 829 511

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829 571 Peter I, there was much more freedom, in spite of the social and cultural backwardness of the people, than there had been under the dictatorship of the Crown in the '30's when the economic and social level of the country was much higher than in prewar years. It is sufficient to compare the liberal Radical, Nikola Pašić, with the unprincipled opportunist Milan Stojadinović (whom Ciano praised as a "true fascist") to realize that the betterment of economic conditions did not prevent the disintegration of democracy in Yugoslavia. Between the two world wars, Poland progressed economically and made great strides in industrialization, yet from 1926 on she was subjected to the semidictatorship of Pilsudski.

[433] In Hungary, after the First World War, the economic situation was not much better than it was in Austria. Yet, in spite of both this and the reactionary regime of Admiral Horthy in Budapest, some vestiges of liberalism survived even the Second World War. In Austria, in spite of the substantial influence exercised in Vienna by the Social Democrats and by the liberal bourgeoisie, a semidictatorial regime was installed in 1934. Germany's economic and social structure was more advanced than that of Czechoslovakia. The grave economic crisis of the '30's caused wide unemployment in both these countries, yet the small Czechoslovakian Republic remained faithful to liberal democracy until she fell before Nazi aggression, while in Germany Hitler was already in power in 1933.

829 These examples are surely sufficient to show that the strength or weakness of liberalism in Eastern Europe did not depend solely, or even mostly, upon economic and social conditions. These were certainly very important factors, but of more importance were the psychological climate and the political tradition within each individual nation. Czechoslovakia remained democratic until her fall because, ever since the Hussite revolution in the fifteenth century, the substantial majority of both Czechs and Slovaks had been

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"liberal-minded" even if they had not expressed this through formal Liberal parties. In Hungary, there was a long tradition of liberalism which had been inspired by the Golden Bull of 1222 and which, in the penetrating words of the British historian, Hugh Seton-Watson, maintained "within the Hungarian ruling class . . . a kind of Whiggish liberalism which permitted a measure of intellectual freedom." This explains why Hungary was able to preserve some, if not all, of her parliamentary formalities. On the other hand, in Poland and, to a great extent, in the Balkan countries, the tradition of nationalism pushed liberal tendencies into the background. Austria, whose desire for independence was not sufficiently strong, became a victim of strong pressures exercised by both her fascist neighbors.

In addition to special political conditions in the individual Eastern European countries, international influences and a combination of outside forces greatly affected the development of liberalism in this region. It should be remembered that the prospects for liberalism were favorable only as long as Western democracies exercised leadership in Europe and that the decline of liberalism was in direct proportion to the rise of fascism in certain important European countries. The decline of liberal democracy in Eastern Europe was, therefore, a reflection of the general crisis of liberalism in the whole of Europe.

II

Liberalism in Eastern Europe was related, historically and ideologically, to liberalism in the West, although each had developed certain distinctive features.

The liberals of Eastern Europe, like those of the West, saw as the fulfillment of the political ideals of liberalism a democratic regime based on free elections and on the principle of checks and balances whose purpose is to keep the

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829 government under the control of parliament and of the free electorate. They hoped for a regime which would guarantee all the classical civil rights and which would preserve the independence of the courts. To achieve this, these liberals, regardless of political party, fought against authoritarian tendencies and dictatorial regimes.

829 471 Liberals in Eastern Europe, unlike those in the West, were not ardent supporters of the type of economic liberalism that is based on competition in a free market and admits only the least degree of state control. These liberals had in common with the supporters of the capitalist system a belief in the economic and social advantages of the principle of private ownership, but only a few among them had a clear-cut conception of the free enterprise system with its economic and social consequences, as it is accepted in the United States or in other Western countries. This difference of conception between Western and Eastern European liberals can be explained easily. In Eastern Europe, modern capitalistic enterprises (in this area predominantly agricultural), and particularly large-sized enterprises, were in an early stage of development. They were somewhat further developed in Czechoslovakia and Austria, and in the '30's began to attain some stature in Poland and Hungary. Under these circumstances and in the face of the limited resources of individual private entrepreneurs, it is understandable that the Eastern European liberals, desiring the industrialization of their countries, sought state support. They asked protection from the state in the form of high customs tariffs, financial subsidies, and currency, credit, and other protective measures. Thus, from an economic point of view, they were influenced far more by the German than by the Western European attitude. German liberalism, guided by the protectionist theories of G. F. List and by Bismarckian power politics, definitely favored building capitalism with the direct and permanent assistance of the state.

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Contrary to many Germans, Eastern European liberals remained true to political democracy but, in the field of economic policy, they were in accord with German views, giving preference to state interference and support rather than to free competition and individual initiative.

Differences in the economic development of Western Europe and the United States, on the one hand, and of Germany and Eastern Europe, on the other hand, influenced the thinking of socialists in these countries and account for the differences in their outlook and their method of political action. While Western socialists sought to realize their aims by their own concerted self-help action (in Anglo-Saxon countries and Scandinavia particularly through trade unionism and political influence exercised in parliaments, in Latin countries either through revolution or political infiltration of public institutions), German and Eastern European socialists tended more and more towards economic and political statism. Moreover, the agrarians of Eastern Europe, like the liberals, socialists, and Christian (Catholic) Democrats, also asked for state action to further their economic and social aims. This tendency to look towards the state for aid in economic matters explains why many liberals, particularly in Czechoslovakia, favored vast social reforms benefiting the working class. It is also worth mentioning that the representatives of the liberal-minded bourgeoisie in Czechoslovakia were always in favor of the highly progressive social legislation enacted in that country.

The tendency to ask the state for support in economic matters was a characteristic of the nationalism of Eastern European liberals. On the whole, however, the nationalism of liberals and of many others in this region was no more intense than the nationalism of similar groups in any of the Western countries, and among the liberals themselves there were great differences in interpreting liberalism.

In Eastern Europe, liberalism was more closely connected

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•829 History clearly proves the accuracy of this analysis. In the second half of the nineteenth century, a "liberal" climate prevailed in Europe. At that time liberalism penetrated even into Tsarist Russia. The belief that Russia has an inherent tendency toward despotism and slavery leads one to forget that liberal ideas found excellent propagandists and defenders there; to mention but a few: Radishchev, Pestel, Herzen, Soloviev, Milyukov, Chernov, and the Decembrists. In the nineteenth century, liberal tendencies were growing in strength and influence in Eastern Europe and contributed considerably to the struggle for national liberation. The victory of the liberal Western democracies in 1918 led to the liberal democratization of almost all Eastern Europe.

III

668 642 The obstacles faced by liberalism in Eastern Europe included both the threat of Communist, and later of fascist and Nazi, interference and the efforts of domestic authoritarian groups that saw in dictatorship the answer to the problems of this region. In spite of these highly unfavorable circumstances, democratic liberalism maintained itself even when dictatorial governments were formed. A courageous opposition fought these regimes without fearing the persecution to which it was exposed. It is easy to prove that Pilsudski and, later, Beck in Poland, Horthy in Hungary, Carol in Rumania, Boris in Bulgaria, Alexander and Paul in Yugoslavia, and Dolfuss and Schuschnigg in Austria, were opposed by democratic forces stronger than, or at least as strong as, the forces which Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin were meeting in their respective countries. In Germany and Russia and, to a large extent, in Italy, the dictatorial regimes were totalitarian and therefore opposition was almost impossible. But the fact that in Eastern Europe only limited dictatorships were established shows that antiliberal, antidemocratic trends were hampered by the opposition of democratic forces. In

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weak in comparison with that of the Agrarian Party which still followed Stambolisky's tradition.

The Agrarian and the Socialist parties and some Catholics, as well as the liberals, carried on the struggle against dictatorship in Bulgaria, Rumania, Poland, and Hungary. They fought for real democracy in the sense of the best liberal tradition. In Austria the Social Democrats were the main force opposing clerical fascism. It is interesting that in Hungary the conservative aristocrats opposed fascist trends. Szálasi, who led the important Arrow-Cross movement, was the most conspicuous of these men. Count Bethlen and Count Teleki also opposed the Nazi pressure, and the latter's efforts were climaxed by his symbolic suicide in 1941.

The opposition to dictatorship and to fascism or Nazism was motivated differently in the individual Eastern European countries and was carried on by different political parties. Notwithstanding these differences, the original inspiration to opposition lay in two main ideas: a longing for freedom and a patriotic devotion to national independence. Pure democratic liberalism is the expression of these two ideas, both of which prove convincingly that the love of freedom was deeply rooted in these countries. Internal antiliberal forces alone would not have been able to crush democratic aspirations. Whenever the elections were more liberal than usual, for instance, in Rumania in 1928 or in Bulgaria in 1931, the democratic parties won. In Poland, Pilsudski's followers, who represented only a small minority of the nation, were well aware that the only means by which they could maintain their regime was political terror. In spite of the pressure of the reactionaries and the influence of fascists and Nazis, the remnants of liberalism in Hungary survived until nearly the end of the Second World War. In view of these facts, it is clear that the liberal democratic forces could have mastered internal difficulties successfully

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186 668 829 had they not been broken or dangerously weakened by the foreign forces of fascism and Communism.

Czechoslovakia bears witness to this thesis. In Czechoslovakia, as in the other countries, there existed antiliberal, reactionary, nationalist, and fascist trends which attracted certain of the bourgeoisie and rich farmers. These forces were held in check by the democratic thought and genuine patriotism of a great majority of the nation, including the so-called middle classes and the intelligentsia. Nearly everybody followed the principles of the great democrat, Masaryk. Conditions were more favorable to democratic liberalism in Czechoslovakia than in the other Eastern European countries, because this nation was highly industrialized, even in agriculture, because her social structure was happily balanced between industry, agriculture, and bureaucracy, or intelligentsia, and because the cultural level of her people was high. The middle classes, strong in numbers and in social value, and the progressive farmers, who owned middle-sized farms, were reliable support for the liberal democratic regime. The Social Democratic Party, headed by Hampl, Bechyně, Meissner, and Dérer, was influenced spiritually far more by Masaryk than by Marx. The Agrarian Party had liberal-minded leaders among whom Antonín Švehla and Milan Hodža proved to have statesmen's abilities. The Catholic Party, under the wise leadership of the great patriot Jan Šrámek, was progressive in social matters. In Slovakia the process of democratization met with greater difficulties. Slovakia, because of its agrarian structure, resembled the other Eastern European countries more than it did the industrialized Bohemia. However, the transformation of Slovakia into a democratically functioning part of Czechoslovakia proves that other Eastern European countries could have developed in a similar way had democracy been given enough time to exercise its influence upon them.

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It is certainly to the credit of Czechoslovakia that she

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continually improved her democratic regime during the twenty years of her existence and that her democracy was destroyed only by an attack from without by Nazi Germany. Nevertheless, the other countries of Eastern Europe, economically, socially, and culturally less progressive, cannot be blamed if, in the antiliberal climate of the '30's, they were unable to develop into genuine democracies. The people in these countries did not long less for freedom and for social progress than did the people in other parts of Europe or on other continents. If the unremitting struggle for freedom of the Eastern European countries and their difficult geographic position were kept in mind, the liberal striving of these countries and their aptitude for democratic development would be judged more favorably than is sometimes the case.

In Germany, which was probably economically and technically the most highly developed country on the European continent and which had a high cultural and social level, liberalism was no more influential than in the agrarian countries of Eastern Europe. It was certainly infinitely weaker than in Czechoslovakia. In Germany and in Italy, democracy did not succumb to foreign, but to internal, antiliberal forces. In Russia, liberalism undoubtedly was far weaker than in Eastern Europe.

IV

The development of liberalism in Eastern Europe in the period between the two wars shows clearly that this force was far stronger there than in Germany, Italy, or Russia, and that it attained real success in Czechoslovakia. There were conditions in Eastern Europe that favored the development of liberalism into an influential spiritual, political, and social movement. The most promising forces in this regard were the striving of these nations for freedom

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● 829 and social progress and their genuine patriotism. The success of Czechoslovakian democracy gave substance to the hope that other countries in Eastern Europe would gradually become democratized. Development in this direction, however, was suddenly halted by the European crisis and by the rise of totalitarian dictatorships in the three great neighbors of the small nations of Eastern Europe. In 1938 the expansion of aggressive Nazism destroyed the Czechoslovakian democracy which, until then, had been an isolated island of liberalism east of the Rhine.

This essay has demonstrated that liberalism has its own tradition in Eastern Europe and that, after the liberation of these countries, it will surely play an even more important role than it did before. Liberalism is not a thing of the past. It is the most dynamic force in the present struggle for the liberation of man and for a community of nations based on the reign of law and mutual service. The greatness of liberalism, as Masaryk maintained, lies in its effort to make Jesus, and not Caesar, rule the world.

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178 voked political and social movements, such as had never been known in the West, and which expressed the distinctive socio-economic programs and political and social philosophies of the area.

565 Before any analysis of these peasant movements can be undertaken, it will be necessary to examine their human element, the peasantry. There are three points which are of most significance to this discussion: first, what is a peasantry; second, what are the differences between a peasantry and the rural population of the West, usually known as farmers; and third, what are the special characteristics of the Eastern European peasantry which have justified and made possible its separate political organization.

565 Despite the fact that the peasantry still represents a con-
● 829 siderable majority of the world's population, a uniform definition for it cannot be found. The reason for this is the different approach of various social and economic schools to the peasant problem. While the Marxists consider the peasantry from a purely economic point of view, evaluating this group only in the system of socialist production, liberals believe that there are aspects to the peasantry besides the economic which should be considered. The liberals point out the importance of the peasant's relationship to his land and the influence of his environment upon him. They realize that there are two elements, the sociological and the cultural, which are of great and equal significance in appraising the peasant society. The sociological element includes the individual's family life, the customs, traits, and trends of neighborhood and village communities, and the peasant's attachment to religious and other traditions. These traditions are upheld by a special type of "progressive conservatism." The cultural element includes all such features as folk songs, folk customs and habits, and so forth, which have developed independent of the cosmopolitan civilization.

In view of the foregoing, the peasantry may be defined

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tentatively as a group settled on a determined territory, having its principal source of livelihood in a cultivation of the soil that is based on the system of the small farm, and possessing its own way of life and its own indigenous culture.

This definition will help us answer our second question; namely, what are the differences between the peasants and the farmers. For a long time the rural sociologists of the West made no distinction between these two groups, and it is only recently that adequate attention has been given to this problem. Today it is generally recognized that between these two rural societies there exist essential dissimilarities which result from a permanent infiltration by the cosmopolitan civilization into the rural orbit. This process has been far more intense in the European and American rural groups, the farmers, than in the genuine peasant population.

With this distinction in mind, the farmers and the genuine peasantry may be contrasted. Economically speaking, the farmers produce primarily for the market, abiding by the established norms of offer and demand. Although they are attached to the land, they consider it almost impersonally and from an economic point of view. Therefore, they are willing to move from one area to another when there are economic reasons. The peasants, on the other hand, produce primarily for home consumption. Because their land is a part of their heritage, they consider it personally, as a part of their life and of their family tradition.

Socially, life in the rural communities of the West has become increasingly urbanized. The peasant society of Eastern Europe has been infiltrated by urban ideas to a far lesser degree and has preserved, generally speaking, many of its original aspects.

Culturally, the indigenous traditions of the farmer population, if not completely vanished, are disappearing rapidly. In the genuine peasant society, cultural traits are still clearly

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641 however, following its policy of economic freedom, did not
565 deem it necessary to intervene in this problem, and left the
178 peasants open to the merciless exploitation of private banks and usurers. Economic individualism, accentuated by liberalism, induced individual members of the large peasant family groups, known among the Southern Slavs as *zadrugas*, to seek their economic independence. This process provoked a hasty and uncontrolled parcellation of the peasant land and contributed further to the economic weakness and inefficiency of the peasant system of farming.

The solemnly proclaimed social equality of the peasant was a farce. The ruling groups, derived from the bourgeoisie, the newly created bureaucracy, and the remnants of the aristocratic elements, looked upon the peasants with contempt and mistrust, considering them, although necessary to agrarian production, neither fitted nor qualified to take part in politics or public affairs. Social inequality was expressed both by the attitude of dominant ethnical groups to the "peoples of lower categories" and by the division within these groups between intelligentsia and the common people, or peasants.

Obviously, remedies were sought to correct the adverse conditions created in the liberal era, but before these are discussed, it is necessary to credit liberalism for those ideas and measures which, in principle, were universally accepted by the masses and which made possible their political organization. Generally speaking, the ideas of political freedom and of general education and a belief in the individual's capabilities were the stimulating forces behind the organization of the people. However, these ideas did not save liberalism, but prepared the road for its destruction.

829 The first reaction to the flaws in liberalism was the appearance of the "scientific socialism" of Karl Marx. It is important to note that this philosophy was conceived exclusively for the newly created industrial proletariat. The peasants, if

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considered at all, were reviewed and evaluated only from the point of view of production with no attention paid to the human side of their problems. Moreover, the contempt of Marx for the peasantry is well known. He called them a "class of barbarians," and proclaimed his desire to save humanity from the "idiocy of rural life."

The reaction to scientific socialism and a simultaneous opposition to liberalism brought about the birth of Christian democracy which attempted to formulate a middle-road policy between the economic freedom of liberalism and the socialist doctrine of the total negation of the absolute truth, of private property, and of human dignity. Being primarily a reaction to the liberal-socialist dispute on capital-labor relations, this new doctrine was concerned very little, if at all, with the peasant problem which "remained the stepchild of public opinion and of the social policy."

The first attempt to use the contemporary social and economic ideas for the organization of the peasant masses was partly accountable for the appearance of Populism in Russia in the 1870's. More specifically, Populism was an endeavor to create an ideal agrarian peasant community by applying the theories of scientific socialism. This very fact converted the effort into a unique social and economic movement sharply in conflict with the orthodox Marxism. It became clear very soon to the promoters of Populism that the formulas conceived by Marx were inefficient in a rural society and that diversified methods must be sought if the needs and hopes of the peasants were to be satisfied. This new movement, although peasant, was of revolutionary character, not only demanding the land for the peasants but also advocating its collective ownership under a particular form of Russian organization known as the *mir*. It pointed out that the essence of the Populist program must be the institutions and desires inherent in the people and that it must not represent scientific formulas imported from abroad.

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829 Although Populism exerted some influence on the establishment of the Rumanian peasant movement, it had very little influence upon the other peasant movements in Eastern Europe. At the time when Populism was already an organized political force in Russia, the peasantry in Eastern Europe was still politically inactive. When the peasant mobilization began, more than two decades later, it was influenced little, if at all, by the Populist ideas.

668 565 423 The main reason for the relatively late organization of the peasantry in Eastern Europe was the presence of political and economic conditions essentially different from those prevailing in Tsarist Russia. Whereas regular political life was unknown in Russia, European liberalism favored the formation of political parties which would try to win the sympathies of the peasants by promising them the realization of their desires. Collective ownership of land was not a common institution in Eastern Europe. However, the prediction of Marx relating to the accumulation of capital and further expansion of large estates proved to be incorrect. On the contrary, many large land holdings, unable to accommodate themselves to modern capitalist management, commenced to disintegrate. The land was usually bought, in spite of heavy material sacrifices, by land-hungry neighboring peasants, and thus many new independent peasant holdings were created, which contributed considerably to the strengthening of the peasantry.

Hence, the establishment of a revolutionary peasant movement was checked by existing political conditions: the traditions of the Eastern European peasantry were opposed to collective forms of land ownership and to the socialist tenets of Populism. However, none of the existing political groups was fit to meet the increased desire of the peasantry for an organized action of their own, and, at the turn of the century, on an independent basis and in opposition to the contemporary political and social groups, peasant organization began.

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ganization did not exist until the Second World War; the organization itself was established after the war by exiled political leaders.

In Slovenia, Slovakia, and Lithuania, on the other hand, truly peasant political organizations have never developed fully. In these Catholic countries the peasantry was influenced from the beginning by the Catholic political thought and subsequently organized on the principles of Christian democracy.

Although the immediate motives for peasant organization in different countries were varied, its demands were everywhere identical because of its common general source—its ideological basis. The programs made the following demands for the peasants: full political rights, proportional participation in public affairs, agrarian reform and distribution of the land to the peasants, social justice, and rights for the peasants in educational facilities equal to the rights of other classes in the state.

To understand better the peasant movements and their aims, three elements of their ideological and organizational structure must be discussed: first, their ideological basis; second, the dogmatic differences between these and other contemporary political and socio-economic trends; and third, the effective points of their practical programs.

The peasant ideology, or peasantism, is the outlook of the peasantry on the complex of political and socio-economic issues in which the peasants are interested and for whose solution they are fighting. The organizational forms of peasantism, established for the purposes of current political struggle, are the various peasant political parties. Unlike scientific socialism or Christian democracy, peasantism is not the artificial creation of an individual or group of individuals; it contains only those ideas which are inherent in the peasant soul and character. Consequently, the peasant leaders do not conceive the political soul of peasantism but merely interpret

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and articulate its principles. Hence, considerable differences must exist between peasantism and other contemporary movements.

Between peasantism and scientific socialism, there are irreconcilable differences, reflected in philosophical, economic, social, and political concepts. Philosophically, scientific socialism advocates economic determinism, dialectic materialism, and the materialistic interpretation of history. Consequently, it repudiates the existence of a superior being, rejects religion and spiritual values as detrimental to human development, and minimizes the significance of tradition. Peasantism, on the contrary, relies on the idealistic principles of philosophical reasoning, stresses the existence of God, points out the necessity for religious beliefs, and indicates the importance of spiritual values. It emphasizes as of equal importance the significance of tradition in human development and reaffirms its position in the peasant society.

Economically, scientific socialism demands the collectivization of the means of production, including land, and the introduction of a planned socialist economy. It evaluates individuals and collective groups exclusively on the basis of their role in socialist production and repudiates economic individualism in any form. Peasantism, on the contrary, defends firmly the principle of private ownership of the means of production, especially of the peasant land, and teaches that the right to dispose of the fruits of one's own labor is sacred and inviolable. It rejects the planned economy of socialism and favors private initiative and the system of free cooperation.

Socially, scientific socialism teaches the necessity of a permanent class struggle and considers as inevitable the revolutionary overthrow of the existing social and economic order by the proletariat. Peasantism, on the contrary, rejects the idea of class struggle and believes in the possibility of a peaceful coexistence of all classes of society. It also rejects

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the revolutionary methods advocated by scientific socialism, believing that the necessary changes in society can be achieved by peaceful means and evolutionary methods.

Politically, scientific socialism is totalitarian in its concept. It does not tolerate the existence of other political and social systems, nor is it willing to share power with other political groups. Peasantism, on the contrary, is genuinely democratic and ready to collaborate with other political and social forces provided they are democratically disposed and have their roots in the will of the people.

The differences between peasantism and other current ideologies, although existent, are less emphatic. Peasantism distinguishes itself from liberalism mainly in its economic ideas. While it agrees with liberalism on the concepts of political freedom and social equality, it rejects the ideas of the latter on uncontrolled economic liberties. Past experience has proved to the followers of peasantism that in peasant countries unrestricted economic liberties are detrimental to peasant farming and to national economies.

Ideological differences between peasantism and Christian democracy are more subtle. Both ideologies cherish the fundamental principles of human dignity and of individual freedom; both teach the existence of God, reject the materialistic interpretation of the world, and seek to establish a middle road between total economic freedom and complete submission of the individual to the community. Yet, there is an important structural element which has contributed essentially to a separate organization of the peasantry in Eastern Europe. Since 1891 when the papal encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, was issued, and especially since 1931 with the appearance of the encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno*, Christian democracy has been an eminently Catholic doctrine and, consequently, not best fitted to attract the peasantry which is made up of different religious denominations. Peasantism, on the contrary, while pointing out the necessity of religion,

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has no preference for any particular religious denomination and is for this reason better adapted to the peasantry.

Finally, peasantism rejects definitely the political and social concepts of modern totalitarianism. Totalitarian and undemocratic regimes in Eastern Europe during the interwar period were always upheld by military cliques, aristocratic and bureaucratic groups, or by the ruling dynasties whose aims were to keep the power at all costs and whose political methods and social views were diametrically opposed to the fundamental principles of peasantism.

Politically, peasantism advocates a system of parliamentarianism with two additional features: accentuation of local self-government and direct participation in the government of the greatest number of people. Economically, peasantism favors free cooperatives because it believes that cooperation preserves the principles of private property and permits the exercise of private initiative. The latter is favored when cooperative arrangements are not adequate to meet economic requirements.

III

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Although the peasant movements and parties were initiated before the First World War, they achieved their full strength and political significance only after the war was over. There were three causes for this postwar rise of peasant political organizations: the formation of the national states, the universal franchise, and the agrarian reforms.

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The formation of national states in Eastern Europe contributed enormously to the development of political life. While the people of this area had heretofore directed most of their political endeavors against the oppression of the ruling nations, in the new era they directed their efforts toward the solution of vital economic and social issues.

Universal franchise enabled the peasant population to